HOW "BIGGER" WAS BORN, BY RICHARD WRIGHT

The Saturday Review of Literature

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OSCAR AMERINGER "has led many lives and has known many worlds" . . . *(See page 5)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

How "Bigger" Was Born

RICHARD WRIGHT
Author of "Native Son"

I AM not so pretentious as to imagine that it is possible for me to account completely for my own book, "Native Son." But I am going to try to account for as much of it as I can, the sources of it, the material that went into it, and my own years' long changing attitude toward that material.

In a fundamental sense, an imaginative novel represents the merging of two extremes; it is an intensely intimate expression on the part of a consciousness couched in terms of the most objective and commonly known events. It is at once something private and public by its very nature and texture. Confounding the author who is trying to lay his cards on the table is the dogging knowledge that his imagination is a kind of community medium of exchange, through what he has read, felt, thought, seen, and remembered is translated into extensions as impersonal as a worn dollar bill.

So, at the outset, I say frankly that there are phases of "Native Son" which I shall make no attempt to account for. There are meanings in my book of which I was not aware until they literally spilled out upon the paper. I shall sketch the outline of how I *consciously* came into possession of the materials that went into "Native Son," but there will be many things I shall omit, not because I want to, but because I don't know them.

The birth of Bigger Thomas goes back to my childhood, and there was not just one Bigger, but many of them, more than I could count and more than you suspect. But let me start with the first Bigger, whom I shall call Bigger No. 1.

When I was a bareheaded, barefoot kid in Jackson, Mississippi, there was a boy who terrorized me and all of the boys I played with. If we were playing games, he would saunter up and snatch from us our balls, bats, spinning tops, and marbles. We would stand around pouting, sniffing, trying to keep back our tears, begging for our playthings. But Bigger would refuse. We never demanded that he give them back; we were afraid and Bigger was bad. We had seen him clout boys when he was angry and we did not want to run that risk. We never recovered our toys unless we flattered him and made him feel that he was superior to us. Then, perhaps, if he felt like it, he condescended, threw them at us and then gave each of us a swift kick in the bargain, just to make us feel his utter contempt.

If I had known only one Bigger I would not have written "Native Son." Let me call the next one Bigger No. 2; he was about seventeen and tougher than the first Bigger. Since I, too, had grown older, I was a little less afraid of him. And the hardness of this Bigger No. 2 was not directed toward me or the other Negroes, but toward the whites who ruled the South. He bought clothes and food on credit and would not pay for them. He lived in the dingy shacks of the white landlords and refused to pay rent. Of course, he had no money, but neither did we. We did without the necessities of life and starved ourselves, but he never would. When we asked him why he did such, he would tell us (as though we were little children in a kindergarten) that the white folks had everything and he had nothing.

There was Bigger No. 3, whom white folks called a "bad nigger." He carried his life in his hands in a literal fashion. I once worked as a ticket-taker in a Negro movie house (all movie houses in Dixie are Jim Crow; there are movies for whites and movies for blacks), and many times Bigger No. 3 came to the door and gave my arm a hard pinch and walked into the theatre. Resentfully and silently, I'd nurse my bruised arm. Presently, the proprietor would come over and ask how were things going. I'd point into the darkened theatre and say: "Bigger's in there." "Did he pay?" the proprietor would ask. "No, sir," I'd answer. The proprietor would pull down the corners of his lips and speak through his teeth: "We'll kill that Goddamn nigger one of these days." And the episode would end right there. But later on Bigger No 3 was killed during the days of Prohibition; while delivering liquor to a customer he was shot through the back by a white cop.

And then there was Bigger No. 4 whose only law was death. The Jim

"Street Scene, Chicago," a drypoint by M. H. Hobbs.

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Crow laws of the South were not for him. But as he laughed and cursed and broke them, he knew that someday he'd have to pay for his freedom. His rebellious spirit made him violate all the taboos and consequently he always oscillated between moods of intense elation and depression. He was never happier than when he had outwitted some foolish custom, and he was never more melancholy than when brooding over the impossibility of his ever being free. He had no job, for he regarded digging ditches for fifty cents a day as slavery. "I can't live on that," he would say. Ofttimes I'd find him reading a book; he would stop and in a joking, wistful, and cynical manner ape the antics of the white folks. Generally, he'd end his mimic in a depressed state and say: "The white folks won't let us do nothing." Bigger No. 4 was sent to the asylum for the insane.

THEN there was Bigger No. 5 who rode the Jim Crow street cars without paying and sat wherever he pleased. I remember one morning his getting into a street car (all street cars in Dixie are divided into two sections: one section is for whites and is labeled—FOR WHITES; the other section is for Negroes and is labeled—FOR COLORED) and sitting in the white section. The conductor went to him and said: "Come on, nigger. Move over where you belong. Can't you read?" Bigger answered: "Naw; I can't read." The conductor flared up: "Get out of that seat!" Bigger took out his knife, opened it, held it nonchalantly in his hand, and replied: "Make me." The conductor turned red, blinked, clenched his fists, and walked away, stammering: "The Goddamn scum of the earth!" A small angry conference of white men took place in the front of the car and the Negroes sitting in the Jim Crow section overheard: "That's that Bigger Thomas nigger and you'd better leave 'im alone." The Negroes experienced an intense flash of pride and the street car moved on its journey without incident. I don't know what happened to Bigger No. 5. But I can guess.

Why did Bigger revolt? No explanation based upon a hard and fast rule of conduct can be given. But there were always two factors psychologically dominant in his personality. First, through some quirk of circumstance, he had become estranged from the religion and the folk culture of his race. Second, he was trying to react to and answer the call of the dominant civilization whose glitter came to him through the newspapers, magazines, radios, movies, and the mere imposing sight and sound of daily American life. In many respects his emergence as a distinct type was inevitable.

As I grew older, I became familiar with the Bigger Thomas conditioning and its numerous shadings no matter where I saw it in Negro life. It was not as blatant or extreme as in the originals; but it was there, nevertheless, like an undeveloped negative.

Sometimes, in areas far removed from Mississippi, I'd hear a Negro say: "I wish I didn't have to live this way. I feel like I want to burst." Then the answer would pass; he would go back to his job and try to eke out a few pennies to support his family.

Sometimes I'd hear a Negro ex-soldier say: "What in hell did I fight in the war for? They segregated me even when I was offering my life for my country." But he, too, like the others, would soon forget, would become caught up in the tense grind of struggling for bread.

I've even heard Negroes, in moments of anger and bitterness, praise what Japan is doing in China, not because they believed in oppression (being objects of oppression themselves), but because they would suddenly sense how empty their lives were when looking at the dark faces of Japanese generals in the rotogravure supplements of the Sunday newspaper. They would dream of what it would be like to live in a country where they could forget their color and play a responsible role in the vital processes of the nation's life.

I've even heard Negroes say that maybe Hitler and Mussolini are all right; that maybe Stalin is all right; they did not say this out of any intellectual comprehension of the forces at work in the world, but because they felt that these men "did things," a phrase which is charged with more meaning than the mere words imply. There was in the back of their minds, when they said this, a wild and intense longing (wild and intense because it was suppressed!) to belong, to be identified, to feel that they were alive as other people were, to be caught up forgetfully and exultingly in the swing of events, to feel the clean deep organic satisfaction of doing a job in common with others.

It was not until I went to live in Chicago that I first thought seriously of writing of Bigger Thomas. Two items of my experience combined to make me aware of Bigger as a meaningful and prophetic symbol. First, being free of the daily pressure of the Dixie environment, I was able to come into possession of my own feelings. Second, my contact with the labor movement and its ideology made me see Bigger clearly and feel what he meant.

I made the discovery that Bigger

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Debsian-Populist

IF YOU DON'T WEAKEN. The Autobiography of Oscar Ameringer. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1940. 476 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

ONCE upon a time the word "radical" meant something to me as an American. It meant "Fighting Bob" La Follette, who had democracy in his bones; it meant John "Pardon" Altgeld, the "forgotten eagle" of Vachel Lindsay's poem; it meant Clarence Darrow, who was contemptuous of "humanity" but loved human beings; it meant Gene Debs, a man of astringent kindliness; it meant —but the list is as long as the bookshelf that stands opposite me as I write. The shelf is crowded, but there is always room for another personal story of one whose "socialism" or "radicalism" was Debsian-Populist, not Leninist. And there is certainly space —say, between Upton Sinclair's "American Outpost" and Morris Hillquit's "Loose Leaves From a Busy Life"— for Oscar Ameringer's richly-autobiographical "If You Don't Weaken," which comes to us with an introduction by Carl Sandburg.

Oscar Ameringer has led many lives and known many worlds. He was born in the Swabian Oberland of South Germany in 1870, first year of the Bismarckian Reich's *Grosse Zeit.* The young Oscar writes of his Swabian boyhood in good Menckenese, with due emphasis on lager, Beethoven, and the proper baiting of Junkers, clericals, kaisers, top-sergeants, and the bourgeoise. Coming to America in his 'teens, the merry Oscar drifted quite naturally to Cincinnati, where he made his living (or what there was of it) as a cornetist and free-lunch cadger and teller of tales.

The young Oscar was a Knight of Labor in Cincinnati. But before he became really immersed in the American labor movement he returned to Germany, to study art in the easy-going, democratic Munich of the 1890's. If Oscar had not encountered Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" and Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward" after he had returned to Ohio he might have become a roystering humorist (he did, in fact, contribute for a short time to *Puck*). But contact with the two books that did so much to shape pre-1914 American radicalism helped to shake Oscar from a simple faith in the cornet, the flute, and the boozy yarn—and the result was one of our few effective and humorous labor journalists.

In the course of a long and honorable career as a labor writer (his pseudonym is Adam Coaldigger) Oscar Ameringer has edited or helped to edit the *Labor World,* the *Milwaukee Leader,* the *Illinois Miner,* and the *American Guardian,* which is still being published in Oklahoma. Thirty years before John Steinbeck wrote "The Grapes of Wrath" Oscar was the mouthpiece for the Okies—then struggling as tenants on poor soil and voting "socialist." The pre-1914 socialism of Oklahoma was, in reality, Populism —and it was powerful enough to get the votes of a third of the state. Oscar was in the thick of the Oklahoma struggles; he fought with Victor Berger in Milwaukee to keep the United States from entering the First World War, and he crusaded in the *Illinois Miner* for a "new social order" without using the stock patter of eastern city Marxism. Through it all Oscar kept his humor, his perspective, and his love for human beings. He eschewed the attitude of the Union Square boys who used to say "never give the farmer a break"—and he never fell for the conspiratorial methods or the force philosophy of anarchists, syndicalists, Leninists, or Fascists.

Reading "If You Don't Weaken" I am struck all over again with the contrast between the older Debsian-Populist radicalism and the radicalism of the post-1929 generation. Oscar Ameringer can write a noble book because he has always worked in the open; he has assumed a world of democratic procedures and democratic good-will. Oscar Ameringer respects language and adores precision. The post-1929 radicals who take their direction from Stalinist sources have debauched language and adore confusion. They work behind a squid-inky cloud of "fronts," "innocent clubs," and "transmission belts." When they mean war they say peace; when they mean totalitarianism they say democracy. And the end is a creeping paralysis of the intellect and the substitution of gangsterism for the old pre-1914 socialist humanism. From Lenin to Hitler the line runs straight to the hell of obscurantism, to a world without moral issues.

Oscar Ameringer has never been a Leninist or any allotrope of the Leninists. But, in his need for faith, I think he grows a little careless in his view of the world of 1940. He condemns Benjamin Stolberg for blowing the gaff on elements making for confusion in the present labor movement. Oscar, how could you! Ben Stolberg has made his mistakes, but, like you, he respects language and adores precision. He is on your side in the only fight that matters in hard-pressed 1940—the fight for a world of straight definitions and honest values openly proclaimed. Without these, all else fails.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART

Because of the words of the poets that are quoted below, the ten ladies of literature described therein will be immortal "so long as men can breathe and eyes can see." Allow 5 points for each one you can name, and another 5 if you can correctly name the poet. A score of 70 is par. Answers on page 15.

1.
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety.

2.
Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

3.
She is the darling of my heart
And she lives in our alley.

4.
Her brow was like the snowdrift;
Her throat was like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on.

5.
Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low—an excellent thing in a woman.

6.
In thy dark eyes' splendour
Where the warm light loves to dwell,
Weary looks, yet tender,
Speak their fond farewell.

7.
Light she was and like a fairy
And her shoes were number nine . . .

8.
On desperate seas long wont to roam
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

9.
Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name,—
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim

10.
Boys, did you ever see a girl for whom your soul you'd give,
With a form like the Milo Venus, too beautiful to live,
With eyes that would beat the Kohinoor and a wealth of chestnut hair?
If so, 'twas she, for there never was another half so fair.

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Billet D'Amour

FRANCE AT WAR. By W. Somerset Maugham. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1940. 111 *pp.* $1.

Reviewed by ROBERT DELL

WHAT possessed the author of "Rain" to offer the public this nauseating dose of concentrated saccharine? It reminds one of nothing so much as a goody-goody book written by a pious lady for Sunday school scholars and Mr. Maugham even affects the style of such publications. It is the worst kind of propaganda, for few people will believe that the French are the plaster saints that the author represents them as being and fewer still would like them the better for it if they were. It is a pity that Mr. Maugham has spoiled so good a case.

Much of what he says is true and needed saying. It is true that the French have accepted the war with determination, courage, and resignation. It is true that they are resolved to make an end of the German menace once and for all. It is true that, as in 1914, they have sunk their differences and become a united nation in face of the danger. It is true that the French are not imperialist. It is true that they consider England and the United States to have a great responsibility for the present war by reason of their failure to implement the guarantees given to France by the treaties signed on June 28, 1919, by Lloyd George and Arthur Balfour in one case and Woodrow Wilson and Robert Lansing in the other. Mr. Maugham makes only a vague allusion to the last point, on which he might have expatiated with advantage, for it is little understood in America and England.

As I turned over the pages of the pamphlet, for the book is little more than a pamphlet, I came across one cliché after another left over from the last war—the timid *poilu* replying with embarrassment to questions of the benevolent general, the dear old lady kissing a crucifix, the good bishop with shining eyes, and so on and so forth. "There are many," says Mr. Maugham, "who believe that on September 8, 1914, German soldiers saw the Blessed Virgin, who is the Protector of Paris, with arms outstretched, barring the passage of the enemy." Mr. Maugham is mistaken. The Protector of Paris is another tribal deity, St. Geneviève, and she was alleged to have officiated on that occasion. There were also the Protestant angels of Mons, wings and all. But this sort of thing from Mr. Maugham! Really, really.

Cartoon from "Le Temps"

"Not in there—I still owe them five francs from the last war."

Mr. Maugham is convinced that there has been a great religious revival in France since the beginning of the war. So there was in the last war, as well as a revival of every sort of superstition. More people went to mass but more people consulted crystal-gazers and fortune tellers. Scapulars and amulets were in demand and I remember an advertisement in a Catholic diocesan magazine of a very special scapular, guaranteed to secure its wearer a wound just severe enough to keep him away from the front for several months without doing him any permanent injury. This sort of thing is a common phenomenon in times of great stress and peril. The "religious" revival did not survive the last war and it hardly seems likely that it will survive this one.

Incidentally, Mr. Maugham, although he has lived so much in France, still believes that it is not an industrial nation, but a nation above all of peasants and of peasant farmers. This was once true but it is true no longer. During the latter half of the 19th century the rural population of France decreased by more than four millions and the urban population increased by much more than that figure. The exodus from the country to the towns continued in the present century and the depopulation of the rural districts became so serious that agriculture could be maintained only by the importation of foreign labor, mostly Italian or Polish. The peasants and peasant farmers are now nothing like half the population and France has become a great industrial country.

Robert Dell, dean of Britain's foreign newspaper correspondents, has served in every important capital in Europe, including London, Paris, and Geneva. He is the author of a book on France, "My Second Home," and "Germany Unmasked."

Has Mr. Maugham spoiled a good case?

American in Poland

POLISH PROFILE. By Princess Paul Sapieha. New York: Carrick & Evans. 1940. 319 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

THE Princess Paul Sapieha is known to American readers as Virgillia Peterson Ross whose reviews and short stories appeared in various periodicals here before her marriage with the Polish prince. In her first full-length work she tells the story of life in Poland during the years before and the days during the tragic putsch which swept a way of life out of existence and left a people in the ruins of their own civilization.

The author married into one of the old Polish families whose estates and customs had in them something brought down from the time of feudalism. Living and entertaining went on on the grand scale but with the brilliant surface life came too the superstition and age-old habits of the peasantry. Into this existence so very different from any she could possibly have known before, the Princess threw herself with both vigor and insight. She tells of her adventures without any attempt to throw them into impressive or literary form. The daily happenings, the meetings and conversations, boar hunts, and medical aid to the workers on the estates, all these things she participated in and she records them with humor.

But besides the country living, Prince Sapieha was engaged in various business enterprises which took him and the Princess into the cities, and of the charming and formal society in Warsaw and elsewhere the story is set down in witty detail. No one who has ever hunted for apart-

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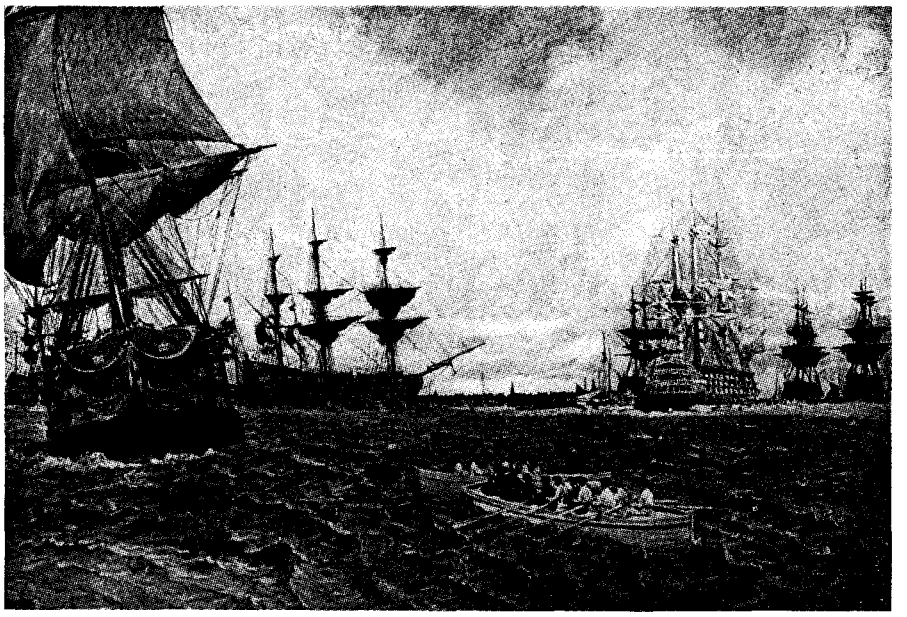
ments anywhere will wish to miss the charm and exasperation of the search for living quarters in a Polish city. In the first visited, "the vast sitting room was filled with gilt chairs and stiffly brocaded curtains hung from the tall windows, but in one corner stood a wide brass bed. In the bath room, which had no window, a folding bed had been arranged over the tub." The Princess did not take that apartment.

For six years, from 1933 to 1939, this life went on. Children were born to the Princess and even with the travelling and occasional moves there was a quiet permanence underlying all. A seeming permanence. For suddenly in the summer of '39 the storm broke. Terror was everywhere. Rumor and fact vied with each in horror. Days passed when the radio and telephone were silent. Stories came of what had happened: contradictions followed only to be overtaken by new contradictions. The Princess with her children was forced to flee the country while the bombers, roaring above, threatened their departure. The five days of waiting and flight with the Germans taking over, form the dramatic climax of the book. This part is charged and tense with feeling and brings sharply to the reader all the special fears and agencies that go into the personal experience of the major and general tragedy of such times.

"Polish Profile" is a moving memoir of the period it covers. It is filled with the detailed and particular descriptions that give a sense of reality to a way of life with which we are unfamiliar. These Polish people, the titled, the working men and women, and the peasants, come clearly before one in their daily living.

Princess Paul Sapieha, née Virgillia Peterson.



© Chas. Scribner's Sons. "The Evacuation of the Charleston by the British," a painting by Howard Pyle.

Historical Thriller

STARS ON THE SEA. By F. Van Wyck Mason. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1940. 720 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HOLMES ALEXANDER

SOME three or four years ago Van Wyck Mason turned from successful mystery writing and set his eye on a higher target. He blocked out for himself a four-book saga on the American Revolution. It was a bold and admirable plan, and Mr. Mason has advanced thus far with flying colors. "Stars on the Sea" is a 700-page thriller; a blood-and-cannon romance which (to use a sway-back phrase) is not without historical significance.

The main plot is carried by the love of Tim and Lucy whose stars are crossed first by an interfering parent and later by the vassals of King George. Tim deserts the army shortly after Bunker Hill and returns to Rhode Island where he learns that the British blockade not only threatens his father's shipping business but the whole issue of the war. At this point Mr. Mason makes his bid for some historical implications—that is, America's need and right to command her freedom of the seas. Tim, having shipped to the West Indies, goes into privateering only to discover the shortsightedness of supposing that a maritime people can exist without a strong navy. "Private armed vessels will never win freedom for this country," he tells Lucy on the last page; and goes off to enlist on a frigate.

It must not be imagined that this message (more explicitly stated in the author's foreword) is anything more than a byproduct of the story. The author's chief concern is with the high adventuring of his characters whom the tempests of war carry from New England to Saint Domingo; from South Carolina across the mountains to Kentucky. At times the minor characters steal the show from Tim and Lucy. There is Tim's sister, Desire Harmony, whose tragic love-affair with a British officer drives her to harlotry and a vagabond existence which is terminated under an Indian's scalping knife. Two of her lovers, a Pennsylvania frontiersman and a Yankee aristocrat, claim much of the reader's attention. Mr. Mason has a great gusto for people and places. There is no skimping of details when he presents his many scenes—army encampments, island ports, ships at sea, growing cities, and pioneer settlements. But the best moment always arrives when he collects his forces for a military engagement. The Battle of Charleston is the high spot of the book.

It remains to be said, however, that this vigorous novel stops somewhere short of the borderline between good craftsmanship and art. Mr. Mason is a shrewd literary alchemist. His produce is not pure gold, but it is excellent alloy. Plot and action are his first and great commandment. This method has its obvious disabilities. There is no room for subtle shadings of style or character. Not once or twice, but many times, the heavy hand of circumstance and false motivation intervenes so that the show may go on. Yet what a show it is! For vim and sustained interest, for scope and excitement this book is one of the best.

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of Literature

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THE LANGUAGE WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND

THE Library of Louvain has joined the University of Warsaw. Once again Louvain has been destroyed by the same men—or their sons. Seven hundred thousand books have followed the other books—the books burnt in the German market places to make a holiday of learning for the people of the Reich.

Books do not burn easily. They have to be primed with gasoline or bombed with incendiary bombs. Seven hundred thousand Books is a great number of Books. The Books were not cheap books. They were great books. They were bought by the pennies of the children in the United States. The German children put their pennies into the building of a Pocket Battleship. Perhaps the German children were wise in this, their generation. Perhaps, after all, books are nothing . . . abstract thought nothing . . . beauty nothing.

What good are books to the illiterate, and who now, will have time to read? Books make people think, and who now, dares think? And this is not the end. More libraries, more museums, more universities will go up in flames. To implant the new culture the old must be destroyed. While books live and men have access to books the human spirit cannot die. When we can read what those who preceded us suffered we are ourselves able to suffer. When we can read what they hoped we ourselves can hope.

The Library of Louvain was no accident. There was nothing fortuitous about it. It is part of a plan that has been considered to the last item, to the last nail that Herr Hitler is trying to drive into the coffin of civilization.

How did this all come about—Hitler, the war, the sudden, widespread destruction? It has come about because we have confused the inconceivable with the impossible. We have thought in terms of faith and morality and good will, assuming these to be natural, instead of considering mechanics alone. We have, because of our upbringing, refused to face the power of power alone, of evil, consolidated by the might of a great state and co-ordinated by a genius. We have said this could not be done merely because we ourselves could not do it and then it was done. There was never anything except a moral inhibition which prevented it being done and will prevent new things being done. We have looked back at history and said that no one has ever conquered the world, therefore it will never be conquered. This is wishful thinking. Aircraft, employed as they are, have made anything possible. They have changed the map of the world. England is no longer an island. It has become a peninsula, joined to France and the Low Countries. Both the Suez and Panama Canals have, for practical purposes, ceased to exist.

We have said that no dictator has ever been able to pass on his power. But National Socialism is not a dictatorship. It is a religion vested in a corporation. It is, in spite of what is written and said about it, structurally sound, eugenically sound, and politically sound. It has reduced a nation to a state of farm yard efficiency. By sterilization and elimination, it aims to produce the super man and the worker—a brave new world indeed and, whatever we choose to think, a possibility.

We have said that no nation can be held in subjection forever or even for a long period but this again is wishful thinking. Why can it not be if sufficiently brutal methods are used? What is there mechanically impossible about putting every man and woman with a university education or who pays income tax against a wall and shooting them? How many are there for instance in England? A million at the most. That would leave a leaderless and intimidated proletariat of thirty-nine millions to work for their own masters. The intellectual, that is to say the educated man, is alone able by virtue of his education, to organize or lead. Eliminate him as a class and there is no hope for the rest.

It has been said that the will of the masses must prevail by sheer weight of numbers but this again is false. The masses, even if organized, cannot with scythes and axes defy a minority armed with quick firing weapons of precision. In looking back to history for our examples we have forgotten to look forward. That history repeats itself is true but it only repeats itself approximately. The form changes, and the form today is governed by volume of fire capable of such rapid movement that all resistance becomes futile. Nor is it certain that the distant future will bring about revolutions in conquered countries. Young children will be educated and conditioned to the new regime. Adolf Hitler, the corporal, the painter, has extracted parts of every creed, of every political system, of every psychological theory and has welded them into a national religion. He has dug up the old Teuton Gods from their forest graves, he has seen visions like the Maid of Orleans. He has gone into the wilderness and wrestled with devils. The sexuality of Freud, Malthus's theory of population and the mathematical certainty of Euclid have all been used. He has studied Machiavelli in his intrigues, Napoleon in his campaigns, American advertising in his propaganda, Al Capone in his methods of gang warfare, Torquemada in his inquisition, Fouché in his secret service, Greek mythology in his Trojan horse methods, the Jesuits in his training of children, Mendel in his breeding of storm troopers, Charles Darwin in his belief in the survival of the fittest.

Uninterested in our political systems we have lived and trusted our rulers. The common man, the man in the street, only wants to live his life. He is a man of good will. By means of taxes, he employs the police to take care of him at home, and his government, with its army and navy, to take care of him abroad. His views are parochial, his hopes center on his home, his children, and his neighbors; and because of this, because of his tolerance and good will he falls an easy prey. His upbringing and education have led him away from fact, have made him hide his eyes from the unpleasant, have made him believe, without logical reason, that in the end things will come right and that evolution must necessarily be progress. What is happening today is the result of defective thinking, itself the result of defective academic education, which has aimed at producing practical men —business men. No one has listened to the dreamers. No one has listened to H. G. Wells, to Sinclair Lewis, to Hendrik van Loon, to Jack London, to Conan Doyle, to Ernest Hemingway, to Aldous Huxley, to Jules Verne. No one believe, once they got over their scare, that the Orson Welles program where the United States was attacked by men from Mars would be duplicated so terribly, so accurately, or so soon in Holland. Why should they have listened? These men were novelists, actors, writers of fiction, and practical men do not read fiction or go the theatre. They listen to no voice crying in the wilderness. Their aim is to produce and to produce without thought. To produce and to sell to any

(*Continued on page* 10)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Uncle Sam Has a Book"

SIR:—I should like to congratulate you on publishing Burton Rascoe's magnificent and much needed article "Uncle Sam Has a Book." It will be welcomed by many rare book dealers and librarians throughout the country. I called up many of my bookseller friends in New York this morning and they were much disappointed to learn at the newsstands that they must wait until tomorrow to get copies.

Knowing the subject as intimately as I do, from the first time Dr. Vollbehr came to America, and knowing many of the inside details of the Gutenberg-Library of Congress "deal" I am astonished and delighted at Rascoe's masterly handling of the story.

MITCHELL KENNERLEY.
New York.

SIR:—Congratulations to Mr. Rascoe for his inspired and richly illuminating article on the incunabula racket which has, in the case of the Vollbehr sale, placed Uncle Sam, indisputably, among the top-rank victims of "this junk collecting game." The dubious glamour of age, as applied to certain book standards, with the added distinction of shabby leather bindings and, in many instances, mouldery paper, lures to this range of collecting an amazingly large group of gullible enthusiasts. Surely, the creator of this, "the choicest book in Christendom," would indulge in derisive laughter—mingled on occasions with wrath—as reports of these inanities (or ruthless mutilation) reach him at his Parnassian retreat.

It is, indeed, strangely suggestive that the word incunabula is derived from the Latin cuna ("cradle") since an exhaustive study of Mr. Rascoe's absorbing "case history" offers ample proof of Uncle Sam's pre-adolescent mentality when he made this magnificent gesture towards the enrichment (?) of our national archives.

P. M. STONE.
Waltham, Mass.

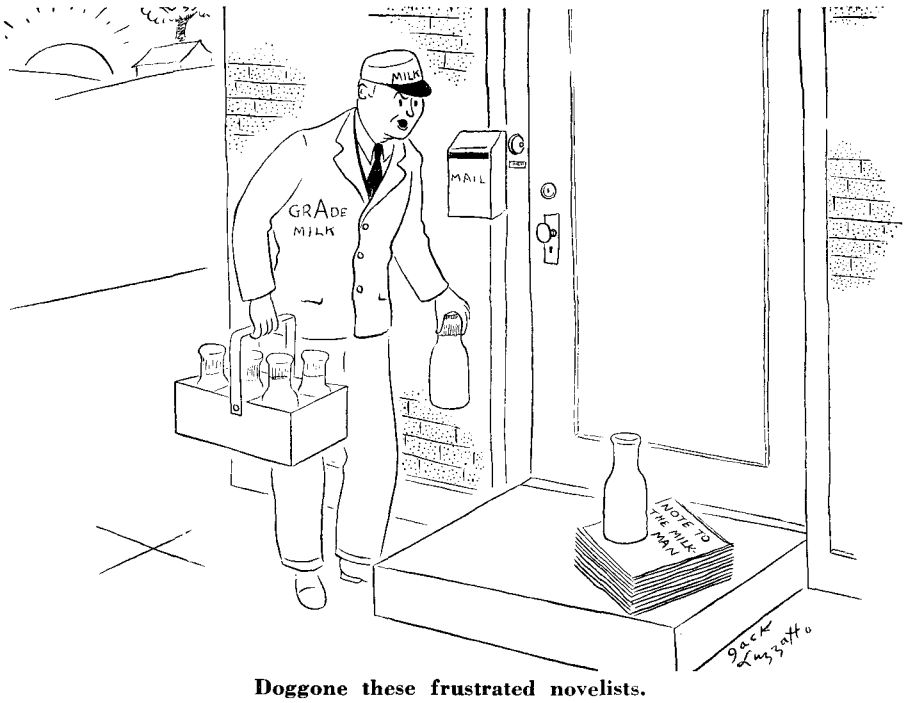
"Land of Literary Plenty"

SIR:—Mr. Calverton's article ["Land of Plenty," May 11], is timely and sound. He once more remarks on the odd fact (discussed at length in the new chapter of the Modern Library edition of my "Story of American Literature") that "seldom does an established American author experiment with a new form or attempt a new approach to his materials."

Since Mr. Calverton ranks me (amusingly enough) with the "literary mandarins of the twenties" I may pardonably be permitted to point out that all during the thirties I, who so clearly belong to the Sinclair Lewis generation, did not imitate my own successes but continued with each new work to explore the hardier possibilities of the creative process. Thus I wrote "The Last Days of Shylock," 1931, "The Golden Vase," 1931, "This People," 1933, above all, "Trumpet of Jubilee," 1937 (example of a new symbolism and apocalyptic method) and "For Ever Wilt Thou Love" (1939), an example of the dramatic abbreviation of the novel. Moreover—and this is immensely pertinent to Mr. Calverton's argument—I foretold the disillusion and proletarian débâcle of the Moscow-Berlin alliance in "Trumpet of Jubilee" and in 1934 in a small philosophical work, "The Permanent Horizon," established that moral identity of the slave-states of the right and the left which has destroyed the popular front and the theoretical proletarian movement in literature.

And today, quite without any disrespect to the talent of, let us say, Mr. Steinbeck, I re-affirm that the novel of economic statement which is as old as Zola, and the play of economic statement, at least as old as Hauptmann's "Weavers," can help us no more and that the creative imagination had better return to a cultivation of its redemptive power.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN.
New York City.



Doggone these frustrated novelists.

"New England Storm"

SIR:—Sitting here in my study at Litchfield watching the wondrous unfolding of the beauties of spring and, at the same time, listening to the news of the horrors of war in Europe is indeed an incongruity. In fact, it brought to mind Mr. Cousins's editorial in the *SRL* for March 16 entitled, "New England Storm." I was particularly impressed by the last part, especially where it says:

> The good smells in the spring air will be driven out by the hot smells of gunpowder. It won't be much of a spring because the earth will be torn and there'll be no room for flowers. The trees will have to go, too. Trees get in the way of tanks.

I have written a sonnet entitled, "Spring: Past and Present," which expresses my own feelings and, I am sure, the feelings of countless others about the present situation:

In the past came Spring with life renewed:
The dead trees of Winter brought forth again
New shoots of green; it was the time when wren
And oriole returned and thus imbued
In us a questing spirit and hopeful mood;
The puse of life went through the hearts of men,
And forward-surging brought into our ken
Sight of things eternal, the holy rood.
But now comes Spring and all of this is gone:
The roar of cannon drowns out the whir of wings;
And every man is like a frightened fawn,
Forgets his God and thinks of deathly things.
This game of War makes each of us a pawn
Of Death; The spirit of man no longer sings.

WALLACE L. ANDERSON.
Litchfield, Conn.

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(*Continued from page 8*)

buyer. Sales of armaments, like those of any other commodity produce more sales, produce competitive buying which is endless. Rumors of wars send stocks up and down for the fishers of the troubled waters of high finance. Hitler was backed by the great interests of his own and other countries. Without them he could have achieved nothing, because of them he may achieve everything.

The invasion of England is no dream. It is no longer even a possibility. It has become a probability—almost a certainty. With Holland in his possession, Hitler could synchronize mass air attack on the British fleet and on London, paralyzing communications, and at the same time land parachutists and perhaps an expeditionary force on the south and east coasts. He could at the same time attack the Maginot line on the Belgian and Swiss borders. Or through Switzerland. Switzerland can supply enough water power to furnish all Europe. Established in England he could then attack France behind the Maginot line if she still continued to resist. All the powers, except Germany, have underestimated the combined use of tanks and airplanes in mass—employed as light and heavy cavalry. A light cavalry that works in a third dimension at a speed of four hundred miles an hour. There is probably no adequate defense against aircraft except other aircraft and then mainly by retaliation. Hitler has said he will sacrifice a million men to break through. He has said he will sacrifice five hundred planes for a battleship. Given the fact that some pilots are ready to sacrifice their lives, and they will be found, a ship could be blown to pieces by dive bombing direct, using the plane and its load as a projectile. In this case anti-aircraft fire could not stop it once it was launched. The target would be hit as easily as a high diver can hit a coin on the bottom of a bathing pool.

Herr Hitler has succeeded in the greatest double bluff ever thought of. He wrote in a book what he was going to do. Because he wrote it, no one believed him. Because no one believed him, he was able to do it. The only lie he told was the only truth he told . . . that about Russia. So within the double bluff was another double bluff.

This is no time for optimism or pessimism. America may within a short time be the last great democracy in the world. A democracy that lies naked, sprawling between two oceans. The future lies in the hands of God. The future of America lies in the hands of God, the American People, their ideals, courage, and integrity.

STUART CLOETE.

British Speech Invaded

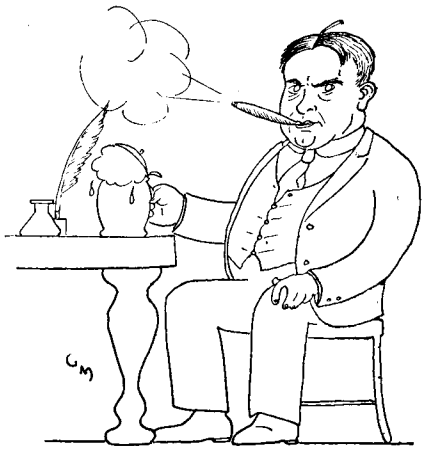
HENRY L. MENCKEN

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is the first of a series of monthly articles by Mr. Mencken on one of his well-known enthusiams, the state of the American language.*

THE first Americanism ever to be reported formally by an English explorer was the noun *bluff*, in the sense of a steep bank. It was heard on the Savannah water front in 1735 by one Francis Moore, who had come to Georgia with Oglethorpe. He denounced it as "barbarous," and his horror set a precedent that long characterized the English view of American speech habits.

The first high point of this storm of protest and derision came just after the Revolution, when British reviewers not only reviled the common speech of the new Republic, but also flayed the English of its most eminent men, including Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, the two Adamses, Noah Webster, and even George Washington. The more elegant minority of Americans trembled under these blasts, but the plain people, of course, were unaware of them, and hence indifferent. During the great movement into the West, beginning after the War of 1812, new Americanisms were invented on a vast scale, and the national language quickly took on it present prodigal exuberance.

History was repeated when the Civil War set the English off upon another riot of denunciation, this time led by Dean Henry Alford of Canterbury. He arraigned both "the blunted sense of moral obligation" of the Americans, and "the reckless contempt for congruity" of their speech. A few tender hearts, typified by Henry James, were duly abashed, but the majority of Americans, led by Mark Twain, paid no heed.



This drawing of H. L. Mencken was published in 1923 in "Literary Lights," by Gene Markey, and was captioned, "H. L. Mencken trying to think of more things that annoy him."

The third attack upon Americanisms—when our movies began to invade England on a large scale—failed even more ingloriously, for the purists were quickly swamped by the very novelties they resisted, and actually found themselves damning Americanisms in Americanisms. They were betrayed by their own young. English boys and girls began to use American slang so copiously that all sense of its strangeness wore off. For a year now *Punch* has been printing glossaries of our most recent novelties with the explanation that they are for "elder readers" only: all under 35 are assumed to speak American fluently.

Even "elder" Englishmen resort to it when they are heated up, though sometimes they use it badly. There was no more than a faint cough of surprise in the House of Commons lately when Prime Minister Chamberlain, who is 71, loosed *go-getter* in a speech, and not even a cough when Winston Churchill, 65, followed with *cold feet*. Even more significantly, Sir Samuel Hoare got only friendly jeers when he used *jitterbug*—inaccurately. Not having studied *Punch's* glossary sufficiently, Sir Samuel applied *jitterbug* to the sort of Londoner who was unduly alarmed about air raids. A thousand authorities informed him instantly that it meant nothing of the sort. No correction was needed when Sir Oswald Mosely, leader of the British Fascists, began to use *hocus-pocus-minded* and *bamboozle-conscious* in his weekly paper, *Action*. If these terms were not actually borrowed from the United States, their invention was proof of accurate Americanism-mindedness.

But all these gentlemen are politicians. What is going on in more austere circles? I might answer by passing on the report that even the King and Queen, since their American tour, have been heard to use Americanisms, and some of them far from Harvardish. I avoid scandal by pointing to the London *Times*, the most English paper in all England, and the most solemn on earth. This is what its expert on old books had to say in a recent issue: "Prior, Ramsay, Smart and some others are no longer the collectors' *white-haired boys* that they were."

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Rational Pastime

SOFT BALL, SO WHAT? By Lowell Thomas and Ted Shane. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1940. 229 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by JAMES T. FARRELL

WHEN the editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature,* asked me to review "Soft Ball, So What?," my suspicions were aroused. It looked as if he were trying to bribe me in order that he might get a position on my softball team, the Studs Lonigan A. C. I told him that I would review the book but that if he wanted to play on my team he would have to come this spring and earn his spurs, just like any other rookie. Then the plot thickened, because John Chamberlain, another former editor of the *SRL,* asked for a tryout with the Lonigans. It began to look very peculiar. At all events, I told John that unlike his conception of the state, my team was neither a racket nor a bargain counter, and that only one kind of pressure would get him on my team—the pressure of a bat against a ball.

As a manager of a softball team, I have been distraught and distressed for over a year. The first problem which I faced was that of the intellectuals. Briefly—I purged them. There is something singularly painful for me to have to stand at third base and watch a philosopher out in center field almost break his thumb on a fly ball with men on the bases. And somehow or other, most of the intellectuals I had on my team were fond of catching balls with their thumbs. Then, there was the problem of democracy. I had to eliminate it. There was entirely too much jawing. Everybody was talking a good game. However, after I had ruthlessly purged philosophers, editors, literary critics, and journalists, my team was, at least, no longer a public scandal. I even discovered a poet who was a crack third baseman, Delmore Schwartz. But he left town on me, and playing third base myself with two semi-lunar cartilages was a task. And then, it developed that I had two short stops. Both of these fellows were good, but neither wanted to play any other position. I put one on second base, and that started the wrecking. My infield was suddenly full of diversionists, who were too busy racing one another to catch fly balls. I have struggled with the problem of two short stops all winter, and it is no nearer a solution.

I picked up "Soft Ball, So What?" eagerly, hoping to gain practical information. But frankly, this book was written by two Reds. For instance, they append to their book the official rules of softball. Now I am used to making up my own rules. And suppose some of my players should read these rules. They talk a great deal now without knowing the rules: but I can always speak authoritatively and tell them that after all, rules is rules. Once they read the rules, how can I maintain my authority? In addition, Lowell Thomas and Ted Shane in their book provide an ideological justification for bad playing. They even include pictures of Babe Ruth, the late Heywood Broun, Westbrook Pegler, Colonel Stoopnagle, and others, demonstrating how such revolutionary activity as muffing flies and striking out can be done expertly. That is too much! After all, the Lonigans go down swinging and make errors without the least philosophical justification. And if they read this book, they will come and tell me that the Nine Old Men and the Connecticut Nutmegs do the same thing, and that Messrs. Thomas and Shane have justified this kind of subversion. Frankly, I ask these two authors, have they no realization of the problems of besetting a manager.

I have only one means of retaliation against these two Reds; that is to challenge the Nine Old Men to play the Lonigans. The Lonigans will surely lose. And if the Nine Old Men win a game, that will cause an epidemic of apoplexy and cardiac disorders. However, on my team, there is a doctor, a psychiatrist, and a medical student—we can take care of the winners after their victory. After all my troubles trying to get intellectuals to look like soft ball players, Thomas and Shane come along with a book like this, pointing out that errors, strike outs and bonehead plays happen in Connecticut every Sunday. And here I am bawling my players out as if they were unique and that no one else could be as bad as they are.

James T. Farrell is a baseball fan who writes novels on the side.

Discursive Excursion

ALASKA HOLIDAY. By Barrett Willoughby. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1940. 296 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HARRY A. FRANCK

WITH the modern world's itch to pigeonhole everything, I suppose Barrett Willoughby's latest contribution to our composite picture of the world and its denizens is listed as a travel book. But "Alaska Holiday" is a travel book only in that it would take a lot of travel to reach the places she brings home so vividly. It is obvious in the first page that the author is primarily a novelist—and a woman. The women, God bless 'em, as the more articulate of the other sex used to say long before we men allowed them to vote, don't look at life, or write, or react to facts or anything else just as we he-men do, do they? And the fact that she is both a woman and a fictionist by temperament (no slur whatever meant) is probably what makes Miss Willoughby's factual tale—or, to be exact, half a dozen tales—such darned good reading.

Like a good novelist, she goes in strong for dialogue. You know how a solid page of text scares off the garden variety of reader, and Miss Willoughby has learned how to woo him . . . even her. I'm sure she would not expect us to believe all the dialogue in the story that gives the book its title is exact—unless her holiday companion, Zoe, is a more competent stenographer than she mentions. But a little imagination now and then, at least in putting down as nearly as one can remember them the words one hears in roaming the earth, makes for pleasant reading and in a case like this sums up to as exact a report on the territory in question as could a flock of professors and statisticians.

Except for one excursion out to a nearby fox farm, the "Alaska Holiday" of Barrett and Zoe takes place entirely in the village of Kodiak on the island of Kodiak. Too bad travel writers can't learn that it is better to stay put and draw a comprehensive picture of such out-of-the-way spots as this, instead of dashing all over the map and bringing back about as thrilling an account of their travels as the average American does of his Sunday motoring. Barrett Willoughby leaves you with a real picture not only of isolated Kodiak itself but of the sundry Alaskan "types" with whom she and Zoe came in contact there.

But the main story is but 125 pages of nice big readable print, so that the rest of the 296 pages leave room for half a dozen other traveler's character

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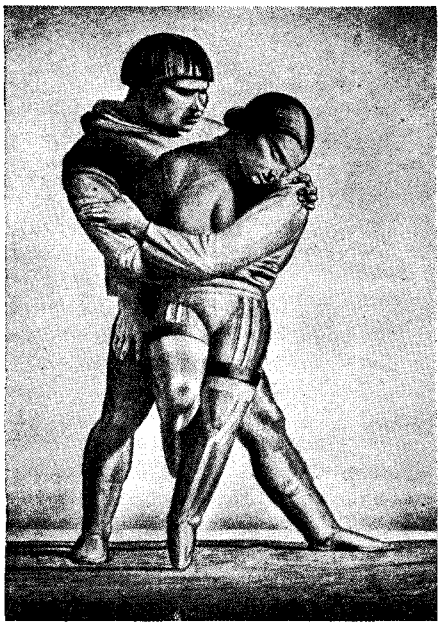

From the painting by Rockwell Kent

sketches. Her tale of "One Alaska Night" is not quite so terrifying to an old sleep-anywhere roustabout like myself as it should be to the respectable stay-at-home reader. Her "Dwellers in the House of Sleep" is the only one of the sketches where I found my interest falling a bit below par, but that is in no way the writer's fault. It just happens to be my temperament not to be much interested in things or people after they are dead. On the other hand, the half-length portraits of the Lighthouse Keeper of unexpected background at Cape Sarichef, westernmost light in the Western hemisphere (it's only 1,200 miles west of San Francisco!), of a "Cream Puff Pioneer" woman of Matanuska, and of "Klondyke Kate" in her Oregon village, with a Norwegian husband salvaged from her Dawson days thirty years later, are alone well worth the price of admission. And for good measure, the quoted-from-the-chief-official-on-the-Pribiloff Islands himself description of the love life of the fur seals that make their summer home there is the best I have so far read on that fascinating subject.

Miss Willoughby writes with zip and charm and while this is not, as I said in the beginning, a travel book in the staid sense of the word, it does take the reader traveling to strange and interesting and little-known places. Nor is this a book review, as anyone who has read it this far may have gathered. For whatever else I may be I am not a book reviewer. But maybe the few really bright readers who have pursued me to the bitter end will have been able to make out between the lines that I liked Barrett Willoughby's "Alaska Holiday" and I believe those of at all my temperament will also.

Panorama of Ideas

THE WAYS OF THINGS. By William Pepperell Montague. New York: Prentice-Hall. 1940. 712 *pp., with index.* $4.

Reviewed by SIDNEY HOOK

PROFESSOR MONTAGUE'S book is a work for many kinds of readers by a philosopher of many interests. It consists of a series of essays written over a long period of years, ranging from discussions of traditional problems in metaphysics and religion to current questions in science and social philosophy. It is rather unevenly divided into two parts: An Introduction to Philosophy, given over largely to definitions and classifications of the main divisions in philosophy, and Experiments in Philosophy, containing papers on a variety of themes in which the distinctive position of the author is elaborated in greater detail. Some of the papers in Part Two are rather technical and of more interest to the specialist than the layman. Nevertheless, despite the diversity of its contents, the volume is unified by the personality of its author, his underlying ideas, and certain properties of lucidity, humane feeling, and imaginative daring which make Professor Montague a unique and impressive figure in contemporary American philosophy.

It is not easy to tag Professor Montague with the conventional labels of the philosophic schools, partly because he carries the tags of all schools, mainly because his approach to the age old problems of philosophy is so fresh and original. He calls himself a "spiritualistic materialist" but most materialists would regard him as a scientifically spruced-up idealist and most spiritualists as an inconsistent naturalist, or at best, as a suspicious ally who makes too many of their cherished views about God, freedom, and immortality depend upon the uncertainties of scientific evidence. Perhaps the most accurate designation of Professor Montague's philosophic contributions is to say that they are variations on the great tradition of *philosophia perennis,* reached by speculation on modern scientific problems in psychology, biology, and physics. In justice to him, however, it should be stressed that he sets much more store by his argument than by his conclusions.

Perhaps the most fundamental of all Professor Montague's ideas is his theory that mind consists of potential energy, intangible but substantial, and, like the soul, both indivisible and purposive. This enables him to recognize the uniqueness and privacy of our "inner experience" and its continuity with the external world of nature which exists independently of that experience. Together with certain considerations drawn from a rather naive theory of probability, this doctrine provides a basis for the belief in a Cosmic Mind or God, not omnipotent and yet not indifferent to human ideals and aspirations. Professor Montague quite correctly locates the strength of the materialistic point of view in philosophy in its stress upon the verifiability of hypotheses. In meeting it half-way, he is often extremely ingenious in suggesting possibilities for finding experimental confirmation of his ideas in all fields except theology. But he is not ashamed to speculate boldly about possibilities whose meanings he claims to grasp intuitively. He is convinced that philosophy must establish the most friendly liaisons with all the sciences without relinquishing its right to entertain possibilities which run counter to current scientific interest and which even transcend the field of scientific competence.

In his discussion of ethical and social questions Professor Montague reveals the same arresting qualities of independence and originality which are found in his philosophical papers. He makes a gallant attempt to weave the fundamental altruistic insights of Christianity and the life-affirming ideals of Nietzsche into a significant pattern of moral experience. He outlines an experiment to preserve the heritage of freedom, developed under capitalism, while at the same time achieving the material benefits of collectivism. Although as an experiment it is quite impracticable, it is an eloquent statement of the position that, since the economic *status quo* is what breeds totalitarianism, capitalism cannot be considered as a genuine alternative to the corporate economies of German, Italian, and Russian fascism. Whatever Professor Montague writes on these themes is characterized by a reliance upon the methods of reason, and a desire to build a world in which security is not an end in itself but a basis for adventure, variety of experience, and zestful living. There is something else worthy of note at a time when nerves are jaded by horrors and when retreats to safe dugouts seem the best strategy to those for whom survival is the supreme good. It is Professor Montague's capacity for hot indignation at cruelty to any sentient thing, not least to man, anywhere and any time, and his courageous attack against the various forms of authoritarianism. He carries within

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him an undying spark of that Promethean fire which is the symbol of his religion.

No criticism of Professor Montague's ideas can be adequate that does not meet them on the same technical plane on which his arguments are developed. In the present context all one can do is to indicate those weaknesses in his philosophical approach which a more technical analysis would substantiate in detail. These weaknesses represent the defects of his virtues. They may be epitomized in the statement that what Professor Montague sees he sees clearly but what he does not see he does not see at all. His imagination is dramatic but almost completely visual. He can actually see essences, perspectives, permutations "struggle for existence." The operational analysis of universals seems bewilderingly irrelevant to him. At many points his arguments depend upon a common sense, whose historical and relative character he does not appreciate. The *real* shape of a penny for him is round; its elliptical appearance is illusory. Some perspectives are naturally privileged. A sharp bifurcation is introduced between the subjective and objective. The positivist critique of the common sense view of substances, which underlies Professor Montague's position on these matters, appears to him as "self-contradictory nonsense." The limits of what *he* can imagine are the limits of intelligibility. And although he has written about experimental pragmatism for almost two score of years, his misunderstanding of its theory of meaning and truth, is almost complete.

Nonetheless, despite the fact that Professor Montague's views are on many points questionable, indeed, precisely because of this, his book will be welcomed by all lovers of philosophy. Not merely for its contents but for its timeliness. For it is a stirring illustration of free philosophy—free of the dead weight of tradition and authority, and free of any desire to purchase popularity by catering to current myths in religion and morals. One need only to compare his conception and practice of philosophy with the dogmatic representatives of totalitarian creeds—whether political or clerical—to sense the difference between philosophy in chains and philosophy as vision. There is a high courage, devotion to truth, and generosity of outlook in Professor Montague's philosophy which make even those whom he criticizes grateful for these vigorous essays on the ways of things.

Sidney Hook, chairman of the Philosophy Department at New York University, is the author of "Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx" and "From Hegel to Marx."

Memorial Day

By Christopher La Farge

And now, upon this day, is the time of memory: we place
Flowers upon these mounds that cover the bones of the old dead and the new dead.
For that they died willingly or unwillingly? For that they gave life
Freely to death, or were drafted to death, dying
In the chill of resentment? For that they died old,
Or young, a little
Before their time or a long span of day upon day upon day before their time?
Days of spring and of summer, of love and of living, of hating and the decay of age?
Is it for this we remember? Those who were reluctant, those
Who were eager, those
Whom conscience urged to early death, those
Whom hate worked upon, fright preyed upon, force distrained—of their passion
They have built another and another day into our history, they have heaped
Mounds upon the flatness of our young plain, they have added another
And another scar to our bodies, and still
In the long cold of winter
The scar aches, hurtfully, but the hurt
Is cherished with the memory we celebrate. Memory? Memory?
We have used the names to a roll, a roll that trundles
Like the wheels of sound upon memory: *Manassas,*
Trenton and Brandywine, the Alamo,
Tippecanoe and Vicksburg, Ticonderoga, Guantanamo,
Belleau Wood and Bull Run,
The Wilderness and the Somme,
Yorktown and Valley Forge, Lake Erie and Shiloh,
Argonne and San Juan, Saratoga, Monmouth:
Is it for the sound of these that these died, for the ring and the blazon of these
That we memorialize?
Now we are older, always a little older, ah!
But only a little wiser for all
The bodies poured like coal upon the furnace of our needs, of our ambitions,
Of our hopes and our greed.
Must we regret the dead, or but remember?
And if but remembering, what shall we say of the next and the next to die?
Always the coal heaped upon the fire of our necessity, or only
Another man gone, willingly, unwillingly, before
The span of his life was measured in peace?
Always there is the measure of thunder in the long roll:
Montfaucon and Gettysburg,
The Meuse and Harper's Ferry, Lexington,
Château Thierry, Mobile Bay, Atlanta,
New Orleans, The Great Swamp, and Spottsylvania.
Upon this day
Is the time of memory, and of memory
Is the time of thought, and of thought
Must come the increase of wisdom, and so
We shall ask and ask, saying, Now, in the new time,
In the future of this land, when the terrible
Plough of the days turns up the good ground that the good seeds
May at last be planted in love and in charity, now,
What shall you do, and you? Shall you wait?
Will it be willingness or unwillingness that pulls you
Into the ploughing, so that your body, like these,
May in a day and a time
Be the object of memory? Memory! Memory!
What should there be, what will there be, what can there be, to remember
When man no longer dies for the passion
That once could consume him?
Pray, let us remember the various passion of these dead
On this day of their memory.

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Thomas Hardy

AN APPRECIATION ON THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTHDAY

R. ELLIS ROBERTS

Let me enjoy the earth no less
Because the all-enacting Might
That fashion'd forth its loveliness
Had other aims than my delight.

IT is likely that Thomas Hardy wrote these lines shortly before his seventieth birthday; and I can imagine no better motto for his outlook on life than is given by this quatrain. It holds the full Victorian grievance, the grievance which sprang from a gross misapprehension of the weight of Copernican cosmogony. Dazed by the admission that, astronomically speaking, the universe did not revolve around the earth, the Victorians were, after the Darwinian knock-out, left with a convinced admiration for the mere range of the universe, and an uneasy disrelish for their assumed or proved animal affiliation. It was the oddest and most unreasonable of attitudes. Nothing had happened to discourage man, or make him less or more proud of himself and his achievements. Wonder at the spectacle of nature, and a sense of the insignificance of man were felt long before Copernicus and Darwin: their greatest expression is to be found in the Psalms of David and the Book of Job.

Metaphysically indeed, the scientific men of the mid-Victorian era were entitled to plume themselves. After jettisoning the idea of revelation, after abandoning the hope that Man is in some sort the confidant of the Creator, they could still point out that man, this spark or speck of negligible matter, had by his intelligence imposed a new order, a fresh explanation on the world which so enormously, in its appearance, outclassed him. A theist, a Christian has some reason for being respectful to the Milky Way, and abashed at the Himalayas; for they are to him evidences of the Creator's work, a Creator who prefers him to them. But why should an agnostic or a theist sing small in the presence of the Pleiades? But for him their music would be unheard, their beauty unrecognized. Yet the most typical—not the greatest, there is no sign of it in Charles Darwin—of the Victorian scientists and their literary followers were fundamentally dejected by what they regarded as the supersession of man. They had courage, these men, an admirable devotion to truth, a grim determination not to be fooled more than they could help; but they suffered from incurable attacks of spiritual depression, from a kind of emotional low blood-pressure: it infected even the most rollicking, such as Huxley, and in Thomas Hardy it found its most representative, most touching, and most poetical expression.

Thomas Hardy: **No author of his period is a better guide to the emotional disturbances of the ordinary man in the Victorian epoch.**

WHEN Hardy wrote the introduction for the first collected edition of his novels, he prefaced "Two on a Tower" (written in 1881) with the statement that this "slightly-built romance was the outcome of a wish to set the emotional history of two infinitesimal lives against the stupendous background of the stellar universe, and to impart to readers the sentiment that of these contrasting magnitudes the smaller might be the greater to them as men." Writers on Hardy too often quote only the first half of that sentence as expressing the novelist's aim in "Two on a Tower": this is unfortunate because the sentence as a whole might well be taken as a statement of Thomas Hardy's ambition as an artist in all his serious work throughout his long life. No author of this period, not even Tennyson, is a better guide to the mental and emotional disturbances of the ordinary man in the Victorian epoch; all artists are to some extent affected by the time-spirit of their age—not even so lonely and lofty a spirit as William Blake, so secluded and private a temperament as Edward FitzGerald or Walter Pater can escape; but a few artists are privileged or doomed to be most sensitive to the opinions of their own day. This is true of Hardy; and it is useless to attempt any consideration of his position in the world of letters which does not take this into account. For this reason, among others, I regret that I cannot welcome Professor Weber's full, detailed, and in many ways admirable study* of the Wessex author as in any way a final estimate. Mr. Weber is far too unaware of Hardy's profound provincialism; and while his industry, his gift for analysis and for lucidity of exposition are beyond praise, there is small trace in "Hardy of Wessex" of any great sensitiveness to esthetic values. To write of a scene in "The Return of the Native," it "inevitably reminds the reader of a similar one between Othello and Desdemona. It is praise enough to say that Hardy's scene does not greatly suffer by comparison with Shakespeare's" is so gross an extravagance that it does a grave disservice to the man whom Mr. Weber wishes to honor, whose sense and modesty would have been embarrassed by such an ecstasy of flattery.

Thomas Hardy was born on the 2nd of June a hundred years ago; he died on the 11th of January, 1928; during a lifetime devoted exclusively to literature, after his brief excursion in architecture, he wrote a few essays, sixteen novels, forty-four short stories, nearly a thousand poems, one play, and the great dramatic epic "The Dynasts." Much in his work (especially the frequent crudities and clumsiness of his prose style which so enraged George Moore) most of his philosophy cannot be properly understood unless we take into account Hardy's social class and the countryside to which he belonged, and the period of his formative years. To say that Thomas Hardy was a peasant is misleading; yet there is no other way to express the truth to those unacquainted with the Dorset of early Victorian times. Dorset then, and for many years afterward,

*HARDY OF WESSEX. By Carl J. Weber. New York: Columbia University Press. 1940. 302 pp., with index. $3.

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was the most backward of English agricultural counties; and it was a county almost entirely agricultural. Up to the end of last century the farmhands in Dorset were paid worse than anywhere else in England; and Hardy's lifetime saw the gradual end of the old semi-feudal arrangement by which bad wages were in part atoned for by free housing and, on the large farms, a kind of communal living. Hardy's father was a mason. In no sense can a Dorset mason of the 1830's be called, as Mr. Weber calls Hardy's father, "a building contractor." So grandiloquent a definition fails entirely to give any idea of the humility of Hardy's boyhood and youth. And on that humble youth, as on Hardy's education, all students of his work must insist, because they left an ineradicable mark on the man.

AN old school friend of Hardy's, J. J. Forster, the historian of miniature-painting, for one of whose books Hardy wrote a brief preface, told me once that as a schoolboy Hardy was deeply and painfully conscious of the social gap between himself and his fellows; "and poor Tom," the old gentleman went on, "has never quite got over it." Then Hardy's social background had an unfortunate effect on his style. He went to school just at the time when in the popular schools "refined," "literary" English began to be taught. Such teaching did not do much harm to boys who in their own homes heard traditional, forcible English being spoken; but in Hardy's home the ordinary speech would be good racy "Dorset" which he gives us so magnificently in the rustic scenes in his novels, a speech in sad contrast to that affected by his "educated" men and women, and in much of Hardy's own narrative. Take these sentences, for instance.

> As with so many right hands born to manual labor, there was nothing in its fundamental shape to bear out the physiological conventionalism that gradations of birth show themselves primarily in the form of this member.

or this, from a speech of Felice Charmond's in "The Woodlanders."

> "Tchut! Must I tell verbatim, you simple child? O, I suppose I must! It will eat my heart away if I do not let out all, after meeting you like this and finding out how guileless you are!"

That kind of writing was obviously the result of genteel education suffered by a boy who did not have the chance of meeting people who used ordinary English briskly and naturally.

The third consequence of Hardy's peasant origins and peasant upbringing has, I think, been most lucklessly ignored. Many of his admirers were puzzled when Hardy denied that he was a pessimist; many more were distressed or pleased, according to their own convictions, when he wrote, as late as 1922 that religion "must be restored unless the world is to perish" and expressed his hope that the Church of England would help in the regeneration of national life.

How could Hardy deny his pessimism? How could he look longingly at the Church, and profess to have some belief in Christianity? The confusion is natural: it was partly Hardy's own fault, partly due to his admirers' ignorance of that old Dorset life to which, body and soul, he belonged. In a village not far from Dorchester, so the tale was still told twenty-five odd years ago when I lived there, the Vicar met an old woman whose son had suddenly died of pneumonia. "I am very grieved, Mrs. Barnes, very grieved. Tom was a fine, good lad, and he will be a sore loss: we cannot always understand the ways of Providence." "Iss, Surr, 'tes mortal hard; but I mind myself there's One up above will look after that there Providence!" There you have Hardy's philosophy—the philosophy of resignation colored by a hope which is inalienably a part of the man. It has been constant peasant philosophy in many parts of the English country since the Reformation. When the saints and images, the pictures and plays were driven out of the village churches, the ordinary, unthinking man was left desolate. Resolute, argumentative people, of all classes—and this is particularly true of the West Country—became Papist or Puritan; the indifferent, finding the new church services a little chilly, once more put into the forefront the old paganism of acceptance, of resignation: the seasons of their year were no longer colored and cheered by the seasons of the church. In remote places Catholic devotion lingered, and everywhere there remained a recollection of the days when destiny was not all, when there was an appeal from doom, and a resort to mercy. There was no bitterness in the resignation, except in a few rebellious hearts, and it was an instinctive not a reasoned thing, and never prevented the men whose outlook week after week in the village inn found expression in ironic or humorous pessimism, from an expression of inconsistent joy at Easter and cheerfulness at Christmas. Hardy could no more understand the accusation of inconsistency than could any of the rustics who met at The King's Head Inn. For him, as for them, life was like that. You knew certain things: and you hoped contrary things. To this, which was of the very stuff of the man's whole nature he gave lovely expression in "The Oxen," written in 1915.

The little villages of Dorset, Plush, Ryme Intrinseca, Toller Fratrum Sy-

ANSWERS TO QUIZ No. 16

1. Cleopatra, in *Anthony and Cleopatra,* by Shakespeare.
2. Helen of Troy, in *Doctor Faustus,* by Christopher Marlowe.
3. Sally, in *Sally in Our Alley,* by Henry Carey.
4. *Annie Laurie,* by Sir William Douglas.
5. Cordelia, in *King Lear,* by Shakespeare.
6. *Juanita,* by Caroline Norton.
7. *Clementine,* by Percy Montross.
8. *Helen,* by Edgar Allan Poe.
9. *Evelyn Hope,* by Robert Browning.
10. Madeline, in *The Face on the Floor,* by H. Antoine D'Arcy.

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ROMAN FOUNTAIN

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mondsbury, Chideock, and Whitechurch Canonicorum always have one constant thing—the village church, guarded by the village churchyard. Even in this century, and far more when Hardy was a young man, those churchyards are frequented places. There the people lingered before service on a fine Sunday, waiting to see the arrival of the gentry and their guests, knowing, in many a church, that Parson would not begin the service till Squire had come. There, after the service, they watched the departure of the gentry and talked of the week's happenings. Sheep often grazed on the graves; old people would sit, on warm evenings, on some flat tombstone and talk of the dead; lovers would meet by moonlight; children running home from school would pause to trace out lichen-covered inscriptions and wonder at the sentiments; the sexton and his laborer digging a place for a new lodger, could be heard talking much as they talked in Shakespeare's day. The churchyard was the village history book and the pedigrees of many there were as honorable as those of the more dignified folk buried in the church itself. The part played in village life by the churchyard explains much of Hardy's preoccupation, now sad, now grim, now humorous, now satiric, with the tombs. Many were shocked at the decision made by Mrs. Hardy and James Barrie to bury Hardy's heart at Stinsford in his first wife's grave, and his ashes in the Abbey Church of Westminster. But how this would have delighted the author of "The Levelled Churchyard," "In the Cemetery," and "In Death Divided." What a "satire of circumstances" Hardy could have written on the "duplicate destination," as he might have said, of his mortal remains!

When he died, a little less than six months before his eighty-eighth birthday, Hardy was celebrated, at least by those under forty, as a poet. I believe that his literary fame in the future will rest chiefly on his poems and on "The Dynasts." Some of the novels will be read, and some admired: they give, as do Eden Phillpotts's Dartmoor romances, an invaluable picture of an England which is, if not gone, departing. Clubs, automobiles, the radio have quickened the surface of village life, and too often destroyed the roots. Fewer people than before go slowly melancholy in lonely places; but there are more "nervous breakdowns." In 1911 I knew well a Dorset farmer who read no newspaper except a farmers' weekly; but he had, and read regularly, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Milton, Goldsmithy, Smollett, the "Decameron," some novels of Fielding, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot, and had by heart a great deal of the Bible. The young farmer of 1938 had a car, a gramophone, a radio, a tabloid Sunday paper and very rarely read any books.

THINGS may change again. Clocks can be put back; but just now Hardy's Wessex novels are a panorama of an age as distant as the countryside of Shakespeare's plays. There are the rustics, men of natural wisdom and that salt tang of expression which so often accompanies a superficial slowness; their range of knowledge is small, but profound; their sense of proportion pays little heed to fashion or the law; and their ironic discontent, their deep capacity for happiness leaves them with but small inclination to indulge in the miseries of the modern deracinated. Hardy's men and women of the land stand more solid than George Eliot's, and their maker never condescends to them. They are the consciousness of Egdon Heath, the memory of which Stonehenge is the strange symbol, the stubborn, kindly yet sardonic people of an England as old as Alfred, yet of an England not insular since Dorset in the Middle Ages had the merchants of France and Flanders calling at its ports.

Yet the greatest Hardy is the author of "The Dynasts" and the "Poems." In his verse, except for some of the blank verse in "The Dynasts," Hardy's style is free from the genteel awkwardness which twists his prose into such strange shapes. The frequent oddnesses of his poetic style, the strange and the beautiful old or invented words are individual: he owes something to Robert Browning, a poet who at once fascinated and enraged him; but in all his mature work in verse Hardy speaks with his own patient, controlled, characteristic accent. His chief faults are a too great liking for metrical ingenuity, and a tendency to use metres often ludicrously inappropriate to his subject. Instances of this last fault are numerous—one of the worst is, perhaps, "In the Servants' Quarters" in which Hardy retells the tale of St. Peter's betrayal, with its last verse

"No! I'll be damned in hell if I know
anything about the man!
No single thing about him more than
everybody knows!
Must I not even warm my hands but
I am charged with blasphemies?"
. . .
—His face convulses as the morning
cock that moment crows,
And he droops, and turns, and
goes.

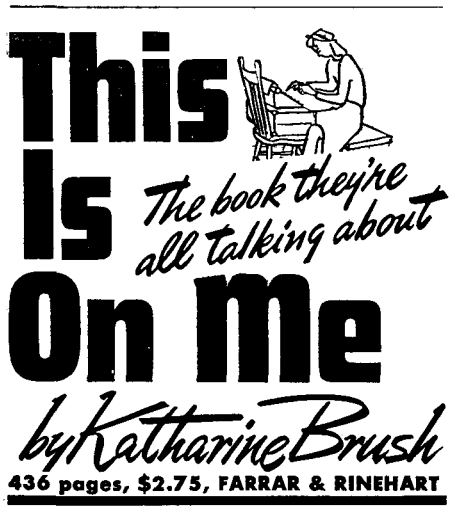
Another is "The Voice," that pathetic invocation of his dead wife, with its light, lilting lines.

Even in these, however, the direct intimacy, the sharp contrast of colloquial speech and deep emotion can make one forget the poet's mistaken fancifulness and labored ingenuities. Here is a voice as immediate as Donne's, or Browning's, and a poet who can at times achieve a simplicity as natural as Cowper's, and has a power of observation as honest as Crabbe's. There is no body of poetry since Browning died which contains so wealthy, so varied, and so human a collection of conversation pieces as the collected poems of Thomas Hardy; and, if he lacks the vigor, the robust vitality of the older poet, he can in his personal poems touch one more, give the reader the freedom of his own sad, brave, old world, of his own meditations of mortality, his dreams and desires. No other elderly poet has had, I think, such power to explain the character of old age, and that without any condescension, without any appeal for the protection of pity. And with how fine a note did Hardy state the secular complaint of the young, vivid heart and mind pent in the failing body!

I look into my glass,
And view my wasting skin,
And say, "Would God it came to pass
My heart had shrunk as thin!"

For then, I, undistrest
By hearts grown cold to me,
Could lonely wait my endless rest
With equanimity.

But Time, to make me grieve,
Part steals, lets part abide;
And shakes this fragile frame at eve
With throbbings of noontide.



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HOW "BIGGER" WAS BORN

(*Continued from page 4*)

Thomas was not black all the time; he was white, too, and there were literally millions of him, everywhere. The extension of my sense of the personality of Bigger was the pivot of my life; it altered the complexion of my existence. I became conscious, at first dimly and then later on with increasing clarity and conviction, of a vast, muddied pool of human life in America. It was as though I had put on a pair of spectacles whose power was that of an x-ray enabling me to see deeper into the lives of men. Whenever I picked up a newspaper, I'd no longer feel that I was reading of the doings of whites alone (Negroes are rarely mentioned in the press unless they've committed some crime!), but of a complex struggle for life going on in my country, a struggle in which I was involved. I sensed, too, that the Southern scheme of oppression was but an appendage of a far vaster and in many respects more ruthless and impersonal commodity-profit machine.

Trade union struggles and issues began to grow meaningful to me. The flow of goods across the seas, buoying and depressing the wages of men, held a fascination. The pronouncements of foreign governments, their policies, plans, and acts were calculated and weighed in relation to the lives of people about me. I was literally overwhelmed when, in reading the works of Russian revolutionists, I came across descriptions of the "holiday energies of the masses," "the locomotives of history," "the conditions prerequisite for revolution," and so forth. I approached all of these new revelations in the light of Bigger Thomas, his hopes, fears, and despairs; and I began to feel far-flung kinships and sense, with fright and abashment, the possibilities for *alliances* between the American Negro and other people possessing a kindred consciousness.

Richard Wright, the author of "Native Son."

As my mind extended in this general and abstract manner, it was fed with even more vivid and concrete examples of the lives of Bigger Thomas. The urban environment of Chicago, affording a more stimulating life, made the Negro Bigger Thomases react more violently than even in the South. More than ever I began to see and understand the environmental factors which made for this extreme conduct. It was not that Chicago segregated Negroes more than the South, but that Chicago had more to offer, that Chicago's physical aspect—noisy, crowded, filled with the sense of power and fulfillment—did so much more to dazzle the mind with a taunting sense of possible achievement that the segregation it did impose brought forth from Bigger a reaction more obstreperous than in the South.

This then, was the fabulous city in which Bigger lived, an indescribable city, huge, roaring, dirty, noisy, raw, stark, brutal; a city of extremes: torrid summers and sub-zero winters, white people and black people, the English language and strange tongues, foreign born and native born, scabby poverty and gaudy luxury, high idealism and hard cynicism! A city so young that, in thinking of its short history, one's mind, as it travels backward in time, is stopped abruptly by the barren stretches of wind-swept prairie! But a city old enough to have caught within the homes of its long, straight streets the symbols and images of man's age-old destiny, of truths as old as the mountains and seas, of dramas as abiding as the soul of man itself! A city which has become the pivot of the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern poles of the nation.

So the concrete picture and the abstract linkages of relationships fed each other, each making the other more meaningful and affording my emotions an opportunity to react to them with success and understanding. The process was like a swinging pendulum, each to and fro motion throwing up its tiny bit of meaning and significance, each stroke helping to develop the dim negative which had been implanted in my mind in the South.

More than anything else, as a writer, I was fascinated by the similarity of the emotional tensions of Bigger in America and Bigger in Nazi Germany and Bigger in old Russia. All Bigger Thomases, white and black, felt tense, afraid, nervous, hysterical, and restless. From far away Nazi Germany and old Russia had come to me items of knowledge that told me that certain modern experiences were creating types of personalities whose existence ignored racial and national lines of demarcation, that these personalities carried with them a more universal drama-element than anything I'd ever encountered before; that these personalities were mainly consequent upon men and women living in a world whose fundamental as-

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sumptions could no longer be taken for granted; a world ridden with national and class strife; a world whose metaphysical meanings had vanished; a world in which God no longer existed as a daily focal point of men's lives; a world in which men could no longer retain their faith in an ultimate hereafter. It was a highly geared world whose nature was conflict and action, a world whose limited area and vision imperiously urged men to satisfy their organisms, a world that existed on a plane of animal sensation alone.

IT was a world in which millions of men lived and behaved like drunkards, taking a stiff drink of hard life to lift them up for a thrilling moment, to give them a quivering sense of wild exultation and fulfillment that soon faded and let them down. Eagerly they took another drink, wanting to avoid the dull, flat look of things, then still another, this time stronger, and then they felt that their lives had meaning. Speaking figuratively, they were soon chronic alcoholics, men who lived by violence, through extreme action and sensation, through drowning daily in a perpetual nervous agitation.

From these items I drew my first political conclusions about Bigger: I felt that Bigger, an American product, a native son of this land, carried within him the potentialities of either communism or fascism. I don't mean to say that the Negro boy I depicted in "Native Son" is either a Communist or a Fascist. He is neither. But he is a product of a dislocated society; he is a dispossessed and disinherited man; he is all of this and he lives amid the greatest possible plenty on earth and he is looking and feeling for a way out. Whether he'll follow some gaudy, hysterical leader who'll promise rashly to fill the void in him, or whether he'll come to an understanding with the millions of his kindred fellow workers under trade union or revolutionary guidance depends upon the future drift of events in America. But, granting the emotional state, the tensity, the fear, the hate, the impatience, the sense of exclusion, the ache for violent action, the emotional and cultural hunger, Bigger's conditioned organism will not become an ardent, or even a lukewarm, supporter of the status quo.

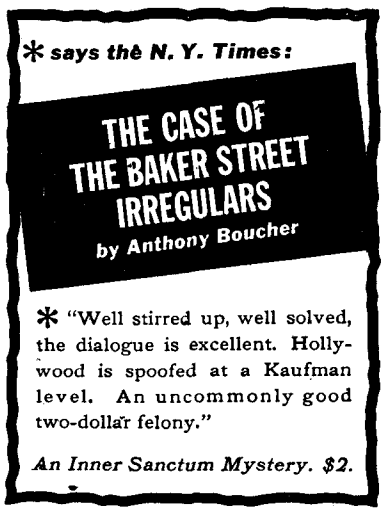
For a long time I toyed with the idea of writing a novel in which a Negro Bigger Thomas would loom as a symbolic figure of American life, a figure who would hold within him the prophecy of our future. I felt strongly that he held within him, in a measure which perhaps no other contemporary type did, the outlines of action and feeling which we would encounter on a vast scale in the days to come. Just as one sees when one walks into a medical research laboratory jars of alcohol containing abnormally large or distorted portions of the human body, just so did I see and feel that the conditions of life under which Negroes are forced to live in America contain the embryonic emotional prefigurations of how a large part of the body politic would react under stress.

So, with this much knowledge of myself and the world gained and known, why should I not try to work out the problem of what will happen to Bigger upon paper? Why should I not, like a scientist in a laboratory, use my imagination and invent test-tube situations, place Bigger in them, and, following the guidance of my own hopes and fears, what I had learned and remembered, work out in fictional form an emotional statement and resolution of this problem?

But several things militated against my starting to work. Like Bigger himself, I felt a mental censor, product of the fears which a Negro feels from living in America, standing over me, draped in white, warning me not to write. This censor's warnings were translated into my own thought processes thus: "What will white people think if I drew the picture of such a Negro boy? Will they not at once say: 'See, didn't we tell you all along that niggers were like that? Now, look, one of their own kind has come along and drawn the picture for us!'"

Another thought kept me from writing. What would my own white and black comrades in the Communist Party say? This thought was the most bewildering of all. Politics is a hard and narrow game; its policies represent the aggregate desires and aspirations of millions of people. Its goals are rigid and simply drawn and the minds of the majority of politicians are set, congealed in terms of daily, tactical maneuvers. How could I create such complex and wide schemes of associational thought and feeling, such filigreed webs of dreams and politics without being mistaken for a "smuggler of reaction," "an ideological confusionist," or "an individualistic and dangerous element"? Though my heart is with the collectivist and proletarian ideal, I solved this problem by assuring myself that honest politics and honest feeling in imaginative representation ought to be able to meet on common healthy ground without fear, suspicion, and quarrelling. Further, and more importantly, I steeled myself by coming to the conclusion that whether politicians accepted or rejected Bigger did not really matter; my task as I felt it was to free myself of this burden of impressions and feelings, recast them into the image of Bigger and make him *true*.

And there was another constricting thought that kept me from work. It deals with my own race. I asked myself: "What will Negro doctors,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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE HANGMAN'S WHIP *Mignon G. Eberhart* (Doubleday, Doran: $2.)	Estranged wife returns to husband at Illinois lake cottage and is promptly murdered. Solution arrived at mostly through unofficial channels.	Highly emotional and satisfactorily suspenseful. Romantic side especially well developed, 'though puzzle is no slouch, and finish packs prime punch.	Capital
MURDER AS AN ORNAMENT *Marjorie Boniface* (Crime Club: $2.)	Superlatively vicious female poisoned and hung in Texas ranch patio. Two more killings and an attempt. Rubicund Sheriff finds solution.	Jam full of action, romance, and variety of crimes. Gets pretty melodramatic at moments, and terminal "confession" drags a bit.	Acceptable
DR. CYCLOPS *Will Garth* (Phoenix: $2.)	Malevolent Dr. "Cyclops" Thorkel finally thwarted, in Central American jungle, by shrunken victims of his super-scientific experiments.	Recent motion-picture feature in story form—proving very little except that in this case film is mightier than pen.	Ten-Twent'-Thirt
POISON JASMINE *Clyde B. Clason* (Crime Club: $2.)	Attempted murder on Cal. scent-farms brings T. L. Westborough to scene. Subsequent double slaying keeps him busy.	Some odd antics with toxic plants, profuse details of perfume biz., clever sleuthing and wind-up with wallop.	Good

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lawyers, dentists, bankers, school teachers, social workers and business men think of me if I drew such a picture of Bigger?" I knew from long and painful experience that the Negro middle and professional classes were the people of my own race who were more than anyone else ashamed of Bigger and what he meant. Having narrowly escaped the Bigger Thomas reaction pattern themselves,—indeed, still retaining traces of it within the confines of their own timid personalities—they would not relish being publicly reminded of the lowly, shameful depths of life above which they enjoyed their bourgeois lives. Never did they want people, especially *white* people, to think that their lives were so much touched by anything so dark and brutal as Bigger.

But Bigger won over all these claims; he won because I felt that I was hunting on the trail of more exciting and thrilling game. What Bigger meant had claimed me because I felt with all of my being that he was more important than what any white person would say or try to make of him, more important than any political analysis designed to explain or deny him, more important, even, than my own sense of fear, shame, and diffidence.

The second event that spurred me to write of Bigger was more personal and subtle. I had written a book of short stories which was published under the title of "Uncle Tom's Children." When the reviews of that book began to appear, I realized that I had made an awfully naive mistake. I found that I had written a book which even bankers' daughters could read and weep over and feel good. I swore to myself that if I ever wrote another book, no one would weep over it; that it would be so hard and deep that they would have to face it without the consolation of tears. It was this that made me get to work in dead earnest.

Now, for the writing. During the years in which I had met all of those Bigger Thomases, those varieties of Bigger Thomases, I had not consciously gathered material to write of them; I had not kept a notebook record of their sayings and doings. Their actions had simply made impressions upon my sensibilities as I lived from day to day, impressions which crystalized and coagulated into clusters and configurations of memory, attitudes, moods, ideas. And these subjective states, in turn, were automatically stored away somewhere in me. I was not even aware of the process. But, excited over the book which I had set for myself to do, under the stress of emotion, these things came surging up, tangled, fused, knotted, entertaining me by the sheer variety and potency of their meaning and suggestiveness. . . .

WITH the whole theme in mind, in an attitude akin to prayer, I gave myself up to the story. In an effort to capture some phase of Bigger's life that would not come to me readily, I'd jot down as much of it as I could. Then I'd read it over and over, adding each time a word, a phrase, a sentence until I felt that I had caught all the shadings of reality I felt dimly were there. With each of these rereadings and rewritings it seemed that I'd gather in facts and facets that tried to run away.

The first draft of the novel was written in four months, straight through, and ran to some 576 pages. Just as a man rises in the mornings to dig ditches for his bread, so I'd work daily. I'd think of some abstract principle of Bigger's conduct and at once my mind would turn it into some act I'd seen Bigger perform, some act which I hoped would be familiar enough to the American reader to gain his credence. But in the writing of scene after scene I was guided by but one criterion: to tell the truth as I saw it and felt it. That is, to objectify in words some insight derived from my living in the form of action, scene, and dialogue. If a scene seemed improbable to me, I'd not tear it up, but ask myself: "Does it reveal enough of what I feel to stand in spite of its unreality?" If I felt it did, it stood. If I felt that it did not, I ripped it out.

With the first draft down, I found that I could not end the book satisfactorily. In the first draft, I had Bigger going smack to the electric chair; but I felt that two murders were enough for one novel. I cut the final scene and went back to worry about the beginning. I had no luck. The book was one-half finished, with the opening and closing scenes unwritten. Then, one night, in desperation—I hope that I'm not disclosing the hidden secrets of my craft!—I sneaked out and got a bottle. With the help of it, I began to remember many things which I could not remember before. One of them was that Chicago was over-run with rats. I recalled that I'd seen many rats on the streets, that I'd heard and read of Negro children being bitten by rats in their beds. At first I rejected the idea of Bigger battling a rat in his room; I was afraid that the rat would "hog" the scene. But the rat would not leave me; he presented himself in many attractive guises. So, cautioning myself

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to allow the rat scene to disclose *only* Bigger, his family, their little room, and their relationships, I let the rat walk in and he behaved.

Many of the scenes were torn out as I reworked the book. There mere rereading of what I'd written made me think of the possibility of developing themes but hinted at in the first draft. For example, the entire guilt theme that runs through "Native Son" was woven in *after* the first draft was written.

At last I found out how to end the book; I ended it just as I had begun it, showing Bigger living dangerously, taking his life into his hands, accepting what life had made him. The lawyer, Max, was placed in Bigger's cell at the end of the novel to register the moral—or what *I* felt was the moral—horror of Negro life in the United States.

THE writing of "Native Son" was an exciting, enthralling, and even a romantic experience. With what I've learned in the writing of this book, with all of its blemishes, imperfections, with all of its unrealized potentialities, I am launching out upon another novel, this time about the status of women in modern American society. This book, too, goes back to my childhood just as Bigger went, for, while I was storing away impressions for Bigger, I was storing away impressions of many other things that made me think and wonder. Some experience will ignite somewhere deep down in me the smoldering embers of new fires and I'll be off again to write yet another novel.

I don't know if "Native Son" is a good book or a bad book. And I don't know if the book I'm working on now will be a good book or a bad book. And I really don't care. The mere writing of it will be more fun and a deeper satisfaction than any praise or blame from anybody.

I feel that I'm lucky to be alive to write novels today, when the whole world is caught in the pangs of war and change. Early American writers, Henry James and Nathaniel Hawthorne, complained bitterly about the bleakness and flatness of the American scene. But I think that if they were alive, they'd feel at home in modern America. True, we have no great church in America; our national traditions are still of a sort that we are not wont to brag of them; and we have no army that's above the level of mercenary fighters; we have no group acceptable to the whole of our country upholding certain humane values; we have no rich symbols, no colorful rituals. . . . We have only a money grubbing, industrial civilization. But we do have in the Negro the embodiment of a past tragic enough to appease the spiritual hunger of even a James; and we have in the oppression of the Negro a shadow athwart our national life dense and heavy enough to satisfy even the gloomy broodings of a Hawthorne. And if Poe were alive he would not have to invent horror; horror would invent him.

The Country Hobby

A HOUSE FOR THE WEEK ENDS. By Virginia Kirkus. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1940. 151 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

IF you already have a house in the country for week ends before you come upon the pages of Miss Kirkus's book you will probably read 'em and weep because she tells you how to avoid all those lamentable errors which you undoubtedly made in selecting and rehabilitating your place. Still much can still be salvaged if you read on because (and as house-owner who knows it better than you?) the work of "improving" is never, never done.

But if you are just planning to buy the escape-place of your dreams you will doubly bless the common sense and industry that produced "A House for the Week Ends." First of all it tells you how to select the agent from whom to buy your house. That's as important as selecting the house itself. Then it tells you what to look for in locality—all sorts of practical things like distance to railway station, to highways, to water supply and electricity, type of people round about, and any number of items which usually entirely slip the mind which has been temporarily bedazzled by just the apple tree or lilac bush. Miss Kirkus is sympathetic towards those temperamental cravings of the tired city dweller but she is firm in the matter of plumbing and a roof that stays put, too.

After you get the place selected and purchased, naturally the work just begins. What sort of changes will make the habitation best suited to mere week end occupancy, which kinds of flowers will be able to take care of themselves from Monday till Friday and still show smiling faces on week ends, how to arrange for a full larder on the right days and a sanitarily empty refrigerator mid-week, how to attract and avoid the right and wrong kind of guests and what to do with them once you have them, and a splendidly reassuring chapter on coping with emergencies; these and many other helpful or entertaining topics make up the chapters of this guide to the good life beyond the city limits.

In the body of the book Miss Kirkus tells many of her own experiences in buying and managing two Connecticut week end homes, Hob Nob was the first one and Windfall the second, and these recountings make very pleasant arm-chair reading. But at the end of every chapter come a few stern pages of "Leaves for Your Notebook" and these are for the serious-minded who really intend to do something about it more than to accept invitations to the week-end homes of friends. Here you will find an amazing number of vital hints (and commands) relating to both the early and later problems in country living which have to be dealt with by the city worker. The book is a heartening combination of humor and practicality.

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THE NEW BOOKS

Fiction

WOMEN WILL BE DOCTORS. By Hannah Lees. Random House. 1940. 271 *pp.* $2.

Here is a story of a woman interne in a great metropolitan hospital, a fun-loving girl blessed with brains, good looks, and enthusiasm. Amanda Paull decided on a medical career simply because she found more reality in the study of the natural sciences than she did in most things, including a young man she was inclined to love until she discovered that his interest in her was limited to her maidenly charm. We see her first perched on an ambulance, rejoicing in the excitement of her work and in her newly awakened love for Craig, a dashing interne from Virginia, and the soul of chivalry. Disaster comes when the patient she brings back to the hospital and anesthetizes, dies on the table without apparent reason. Profoundly shocked, she is unable to free herself from the fear that it was her lack of skill that caused the death. For months she lives in terror of her own inadequacy and convinces herself that she is a hopeless misfit in her profession. She manages to carry on, but leans more and more on the protection of her handsome Craig, evading in so far as possible every responsibility. A catastrophic fire in a neighboring refinery crowds the hospital with its victims, and demands all the courage and endurance available in the entire staff. Forced to fight suffering and death under appalling conditions, Amanda snaps out of her "shell-shock." Her eyes are opened to other matters as well and she gains a new insight into male psychology. The final result is one answer at least to the question—if question there be—of how to be a doctor and a woman at the same time.

All of this story takes place within the hospital, the same hospital we have seen so often of late. But this time the picture is painted without distortion or sentimentality. Miss Lees knows her hospitals and her doctors, and she writes of both with refreshing naturalness and honesty. "Women Will Be Doctors" is an interesting and well-written first novel.

M. S. U.

MOTHER OF THE SMITHS. By Lorraine Carr. Macmillan. 1940. 296 *pp.* $2.50.

What makes a novel convincing? Well, for one thing, an agreement between the author and the reader as to the tone in which a story is told.

The point which the present novel makes, over and over again, about the courage and tenacity of a poor woman with a grand sense of obligation to others, is a point that has always been worth making. Sabe Smith, the leading character, is the wife of a witless man who has brought her from Texas to Taos. They stay a little while, and then head back to Texas. Their six children, all boys, come in rapid succession. The husband, Si, returns to Taos to look for gold which he never finds. The mother and her boys follow presently.

Since we have plenty of other evidence of Sabe's fortitude, this backtrack to Texas and return to Taos contributes nothing to the novel's design, or the growth of its characters, and is an illustration of the author's tendency to let her material go uncriticized.

The story spreads across the time it takes the boys to grow up, and is crowded with both comic and tragic events. But however warmly we may agree that women like Sabe and sons like hers are admirable, and are glad the author has said so, there is still this matter of the tone, and of being convinced. Sabe's story is a sentimental one, which is why it cannot afford very sentimental treatment. There is a sort of fond unreality about the dialects of the Texans and the Mexicans at Taos which would be acceptable as a convention if it weren't for a footnote on page 36 which says that "The name Jesus in Spanish is pronounced Ha'-oos." This being wrong, it robs the author of authority.

P. H.

Poetry

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF A. E. HOUSMAN. Holt. 1940. 267 *pp., with index.* $3.

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W. R. B.

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SUBLET—SUMMER. Furnished 2 rooms, bath, kitchenette, one flight, adjoining Radio City. Spacious, cool, quiet, piano. $45. Randolph, 58 West 48th. BRyant 9-8168.

UNUSUAL GENTLEWOMAN AVAILABLE as secretarial companion to gentleman or lady. Unusual capacity, responsibility, respectability and resourcefulness. References exchanged. R-17, P. O. Box 3443, Philadelphia, Pa.

SUBURBAN COLLEGE for women needs young woman, early thirties, for position of social dean and secretary. Qualifications: Catholic religion, college experience. Traveling experience desirable. Comfortable living, pleasant surroundings. Salary in accord. Box 859-D.

NEW YORK CITY TEACHER will sublet, for July and August, her one and a half room completely furnished Manhattan apartment in fashionable London Terrace, N. Y. C. Interesting features: fifteenth floor Hudson River view, new maple furniture, southern exposure, use of large pool, marine sundeck and club facilities. Teachers only. Box 860-D.

ENGINEER, thirty, finds life dull, would welcome ideas, suggestions from woman thirtyish, who likes books, the out of doors, sports, and who possesses a zest for living. Box 861-D.

"GET OUT OF TOWN", Cool, Quiet, Elm Shaded, QUAKER HILL INN, Pawling, New York. 1,200′ elevation. GOOD FOOD. Golf, Swimming, Tennis, Horse-back riding, secluded, no traffic, 55 acres, RESTRICTED, 75 miles from mid-town Manhattan, 2 hours. Illustrated folder. Minimum $25.00 weekly. Telephone Pawling 4041.

WILL SHARE WITH LADY extremely attractive home in country. Accessible to N. Y. Box 865-D.

BUSINESS MAN driving California early June for two months seeks young secretary perfect steno assist driving. Write fees. References. Box 872-D.

PERSONALS

AN ENTHUSIASTIC cultivated woman early fifties wishes correspondent with humor and sensible ideas. Box 871-D.

IN HOME ON ISLAND,—Mt. Desert filling northern horizon, open ocean south, ample space for peaceful rambling—three dainty rooms, comfortable beds, generous table. Mrs. Velma Teel, Little Cranberry, Maine. (During May, Matinicus, Me.)

LOOKING FOR A CHANGE? Quiet? Restful? Breakfast in bed? Gorgeous panorama of Lake Winnipesaukee and the White Mountains? Stay in a quaint, modern, 140-year old unique Inn? Then write for free Autobiography of a Modern Old Lady—Holiday House, Gilford-Laconia, N. H. Our Christian clientele gives really glowing reports.

FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE—this beauty spot on Cape Cod sitting on top of a hill, away from the bustle of everyday life—will charm you. Old-fashioned hospitality, modern comfort. Relaxation—or play. We have most everything for a few. Restricted clientele. $6-$9 daily, American Plan. HIGH BREWSTER, West Brewster, Mass. Tel. Brewster 59.

SIMPLE COMFORT AND EXCELLENT FOOD at The Firs, Sunset, Maine. Wonderful Scenery, Varied Recreation. Christian Clientele. Easily Accessible. Unexploited Deer Isle, Center of Penobscot Bay Resort Region, $20-$25, weekly, American Plan. Booklet. J. E. Knowlton, 6 Hawthorne Place, Montclair, N. J.

VERY QUIET. High Altitude. One or two adult boarders in private family, $25 weekly. Mrs. Dorothy Wheeler, Willoughby, Vermont.

BROOKLYN BUSINESS MAN, early forties, wishes to hear from congenial party. Interests—psychology, plays, good steaks and the open road (motoring). Box 828-D.

HOW ABOUT A SEA ISLAND VACATION? Come to **The Moors,** Vinalhaven, Maine. Fifth Season. Weekly rate, thirty dollars.

YORKS LOG VILLAGE, Loon Lake, Rangeley, Maine. Free! Absolutely no charge for saddle horses, golf, tennis, garage, boats, canoes, ponies for the children. Main lodge with individual cabins, all modern conveniences. Best hotel services, American plan. Atmosphere exclusive club. Christian clientele. Post Box 1.

MAID-OF-ODDS-AND-ENDS—M.A., Phi Beta Kappa. Kitchencraft, research, translation, typing, tutoring. Pleasant summer rather than big money. Box 867-D.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in publishing, small established house, not in difficulties, needs competent man and additional capital for expansion. Box 868-D.

"TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE MAST" aboard a Yankee schooner. Adventure under sail along the Coast of Maine, two weeks—$70.00, one week—$38.00. Capt. Frank Swift, Box 57, Camden, Maine.

YOUR SPEECH, POEM, SALES PRESENTATION, job qualifications edited, electrically transcribed expertly for phonograph, radio. Reasonable. Box 862-D.

SUMMER AT PEMAQUID POINT, between a quiet bay for swimming and Maine's highest sea-cliffs for surf. Spruce woods, blueberry meadows, quiet. Lobsters, chowder, wood fires. Artists' paradise. Very reasonable. Bradley Inn, Pemaquid Point, Maine.

GREEN SHADOWS, Lyme, Conn. A delightful place all year round. Hills, woods, and water. Excellent food.

JUNIOR COLLEGE. National reputation. Full enrollment. Substantial cash payment. Box 858-D.

DO YOU PREFER PEACE, quiet and rusticity to the usual summer uproar? If so, a very comfortable, completely furnished farm-house, strikingly situated in Vermont hills, near Arlington, awaits you. Ten rooms, three baths, garage with extra rooms and bath, old barn with badminton court. View forty miles up valley, fields and woodlands, beautiful stream and miles of dirt roads. Rent includes care of garden by salty, trustworthy Vermont native. Rent really reasonable. Box 822-D.

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PERSONALS

DO YOU LIKE Mountain climbing, beautiful scenery, peace and quiet, swimming pool, tennis, over 240 varieties of birds and flowers? Do you INSIST on simple, wholesome home cooking? Is one of your "musts" extra comfortable beds? Then visit FERNCROFT—a "Mountain Inn Where Nature and Hospitality are Richly Bountiful." 700 acres in the heart of the Sandwich Range. Trails to seven mountains START at FERNCROFT. $26.00 to $35.00 weekly. Write for booklet, FERNCROFT, WONALANCET, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

SWISS MEADOWS—Peace on our 500 acres, enjoyed as isolationist or collectively. 1200′ elevation, no sound nor sight of nearest neighbor. Meals served on terrace overlooking Berkshire hills and valleys. Century old farmhouse, new Swiss Chalet, swimming pool. June 28th-October 15th. Mrs. Cornelia S. Parker, Williamstown, Mass.

"HILLSIDE INN," Lyme, Connecticut. Beautifully located, off the beaten path. Ideal for quiet and rest.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT? Information discreetly developed, any Matter, Person, Problem, Anywhere, World-Wide facilities. William Herman, 7-R Dey Street, New York.

OCEAN COTTAGES, CAPE COD. De Luxe suites. Fireplaces. Private Beach; Tennis Courts; Restaurant. Restricted Clientele. Folder; Popponesset Beach, Falmouth, Mass.

YE LAKE-LOVERS! Scenery Lubbers!! Bar-Flies!!! That Pirate, Roy Duryea, ordains that you shift to Kay Rock for Memorial Day Weekend, where you will dig up the treasure of everything for the grandest good time you ever had—including breakfast till ten. Kay Rock, Lake Pocotopaung, East Hampton, Connecticut. N. Y. Phone CHickering 4-0467.

TO MEXICO! Learn the easy Spanish without effort, during our 16 and 30 Days Mexican Tours. Unusually reasonable. Write: Language Centre, 113 West 57th, N. Y. C.

AN OLD NEW ENGLAND FARMHOUSE offers you a vacation on the open ocean. Lobster, new peas, blueberry pie; a wood fire; no radio. The Breakers, Vinalhaven, Maine.

ATTRACTIVE CAPE COD TYPE COTTAGE. Commute 80 minutes to New York City. Approx. 200 ft. from private beach and boat basin. Two story living room, 2 bedrooms, bath and kitchen. Electric refrigeration and all conveniences. Must sacrifice furnished or unfurnished $2300. Terms. Box 866-D.

You'll like THE NORTHFIELD at East Northfield, Massachusetts, if instead of a succession of social events you enjoy outdoor sports on a lovely 250 acre estate, spacious rooms, delicious meals, the acquaintance of genuine people, and serene living. For further details write A. Gordon Moody, Manager.

COMPTON'S, at Old Saybrook, Conn., "Where the River Joins the Sound." Nice atmosphere, excellent food. Open all year.

FOR SALE: Thriving rental library in large West Coast city. Business established sixteen years. Partners' outside interests necessitate disposal. $6500.00 cash. Box 825-D.

EMERGENCY! Lake George cottage. Someone to assume payments. Box 856-D.

ESCAPE FROM THE CITY—we did, why don't you, too, at our comfortable White Mountain guest farm? Restricted clientele. Booklet WHITNEY'S IN JACKSON, N. H. Box 1.

RESTFUL ISLAND HOME. Water's edge. Modern conveniences. Excellent table. Fresh sea foods, vegetables, berries. Fishing, boating, bathing. Free rowboats. $18. June to Oct. E. F. Roberts, Vinal Haven, Maine.

FOR RENT—Five-room cottage completely furnished, rural, near Great Barrington, Massachusetts, electricity, water in kitchen, *$100 July through* September. Ruth Wetter, 103 Park View Avenue, Bronxville, N. Y.

Double-Crostics: No. 323

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

										1-K	2-X	3-W		4-W	5-M	6-B
	7-T	8-R	9-V	10-N	11-D	12-U	13-J		14-W	15-L		16-P	17-D	18-X	19-W	
20-Q	21-S		22-N	23-V	24-H	25-P	26-S	27-R	28-A	29-C		30-P	31-B		32-V	33-X
34-B		35-Y	36-K	37-A		38-J	39-D	40-H	41-A	42-T		43-T	44-Y	45-Z	46-E	
47-S	48-M	49-L	50-G		51-M	52-X	53-K		54-I	55-T	56-N	57-Z	58-H	59-P	60-Y	
61-F	62-D	63-N	64-G	65-I	66-E	67-O		68-G	69-W	70-Z		71-V	72-O	73-F	74-B	75-I
76-W	77-T	78-M	79-A	80-H	81-K		82-H	83-E	84-T	85-I	86-P	87-S		88-Q	89-X	
90-K	91-L	92-X	93-R	94-E	95-U		96-K	97-A	98-G		99-U	100-Y	101-O	102-X		103-Y
104-A	105-G		106-F	107-O	108-V	109-B	110-S	111-I	112-Z	113-R	114-M	115-W		116-T	117-M	
118-J	119-U	120-Z	121-E	122-L	123-F	124-C	125-I	126-M	127-Y		128-P	129-U	130-F	131-D	132-B	133-C
	134-H	135-O	136-Q	137-T	138-P	139-E	140-K		141-W	142-G		143-Q		144-N	145-J	146-Z
147-B	148-X	149-W	150-T	151-S	152-R		153-N	154-Y	155-S	156-C		157-G	158-E	159-I		160-U
161-H	162-M	163-Z		164-Y	165-G	166-P		167-Q	168-I	169-O	170-D		171-J	172-C	173-X	174-F
175-D	176-T	177-N	178-W	179-H	180-S	181-E		182-V	183-F	184-I	185-T	186-B	187-A	188-W		

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 20 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. French poet (1762-94).

B. Alsace-born American musician (1861-1935).

C. Son of Jacob and Zilpah.

D. Treaty ending Spanish Succession War.

E. Thoroughly (usually ill-meaning) (comp.)

F. Goods, movables.

G. Most abundant Atlantic coast fish.

H. Pert.

I. Perpendicular (comp.)

J. Empyrean.

K. Unkempt; rascally.

L. Real name of American humorist (1818-85).

M. Trade union arrangement for taking dues from wages.

N. English essayist (1672-1719

O. Rebuke, warning.

P. Character in "All's Well That Ends Well."

Q. Dress worn on Mecca pilgrimage.

R. Fool.

S. Employed artifices.

T. Agedly timid or fussy (comp.)

U. English poet (1653-83).

V. American poet (1842-81).

W. One advocating restoration of lost territory.

X. Son of Prometheus who survived the Deluge.

Y. Droplike.

Z. Clothed in weasel-fur.

WORDS

28 104 37 97 79 41 187

34 147 6 109 31 74 186 132

124 133 156 29 172

39 175 62 131 11 17 170

121 158 94 139 66 181 83 46

123 61 73 183 106 130 171

157 105 142 165 68 98 64 50

24 40 58 134 82 161 80 179

75 85 184 159 125 111 168 54 65

13 171 118 145 38

140 36 96 81 53 1 90

15 122 91 49

78 5 126 114 162 48 51 117

10 144 22 63 153 177 56

101 135 169 67 107 72

128 25 30 86 166 59 16 138

20 88 136 143 167

93 8 27 113 152

151 180 110 155 26 21 87 47

116 43 185 176 84 7 150 77 55 42 137

129 12 95 99 119 160

182 32 108 71 23 9

14 178 149 115 3 76 69 4 141 188 19

102 89 173 148 18 33 92 52 2

60 154 164 103 44 35 100 127

112 120 146 45 57 163 70

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TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE Book and Magazine Guild (239 Fourth Avenue, New York City) has issued in pamphlet form its report of the first general Salary Survey ever made in the book publishing industry. Thirty-six New York publishing houses coöperated. The figures reported are too various for summary here; the general impression one receives is more or less what one expected: that salaries in the book business are slightly lower than average in most high-class trades; and that the White Collar Girl is definitely at a disadvantage compared to her masculine colleague. ☞Old Q. remembers suggesting the same conclusion in his long since forgotten series of dialogues in Trade Winds many years ago, when he described the adventures and aspirations of two young booksellers, viz., Jocunda Vassar and Young Amherst. ☞Old Q. gave up writing about these young people when some infatuated bibliophile wrote in describing them as "bookabosoms."

★ ★

☞The sequence is not necessarily logical, but we learned from the *Chicago Daily News* that Mr. Ben Abramson (only begetter of The Argus Book Shop, Chicago) had one of his one hundred eyes blackened in a streetcar brawl with a passenger who was smoking a Pittsburgh panatela. ☞The fighting spirit has long been lacking in booksellers and Old Q. is glad to see it revived. ☞The 1940-41 edition of *Who's Who in America* will be published May 31. Old Q. has always regarded this volume as his favorite omnibus of fairy-tales and surprises. ☞An odd enterprise is that of "Help Flaunted," 20 West 10th Street, New York City, where two ladies are compiling an omnibus of unusual anecdotes or "domestic trivia" dealing with what used to be called "the servant problem." Any one who remembers some astonishing but veracious episode of below-stairs life is invited to communicate same. ☞Llewelyn Powys before his death was able to autograph 493 copies of a little book of essays called *A Baker's Dozen* which is now published by the Trovillion Private Press at Herrin, Illinois. These are offered at $3, decorated and also signed by the illustrator, Mathias Noheimer. Those who admire the tingling, warm-blooded vitality of Powys's writing will treasure this concluding testament. ☞*The Press*, newspaper of Christchurch, New Zealand, in its excellent literary department, asks Old Q. what he meant by saying that "he was very nearly born a New Zealander." The fact is that Old Q.'s father when a young man was offered a job as professor at the University of Otago, which he was greatly tempted to accept. If he had done so it is reasonable to suppose that Old Q. might by now have been collaborating on that same book-page which asks the question. ☞One of the ships commanded by Joseph Conrad was named *Otago*, which is another affectionate association we feel in that direction. ☞It was the *Otago*, we believe, which Conrad was describing in *The Shadow Line;* which, like most of Conrad's most important stories, is almost unknown to literary critics.

★ ★

☞Richard Halliburton disappeared in a typhoon in the China Seas in March, 1939, but Bobbs-Merrill now inform us that he left behind him a series of letters written to his parents during some twenty years. These letters are to be published in July in the form of an autobiography. ☞A book we hanker for, because it might perhaps be construed as a fable of civilization, is *Poltergeists* by Sacheverell Sitwell, announced in London by Faber & Faber. Fortunately not many of us have been personally afflicted by this little-known kind of spook, but its existence has been pretty thoroughly substantiated. We have not heard who will publish the book in this country. ☞That part of the United States least likely to exhibit the malefic activity of a poltergeist is the suave and well cossetted Commonwealth of Maryland. ☞Even as he says this Old Q. remembers that Mr. Hulbert Footner has told him strange stories of doings in the old manors of the Chesapeake. ☞However that may be, Oxford University Press announces for early publication *The Maryland Guide,* a new volume in the series of Federal Writers' Projects. ☞We have before now warned Maryland against telling outsiders too much about her charms; we should be sorry to see her all Vermonted up.

★ ★

☞A mysterious correspondent in Chicago says he was persuaded by something we said to read Marvin Lowenthal's edition of Montaigne. He had known, he says, little about the old gentleman until he "noted that his great-grandfather was Raymond Eyquem. Why, I used to know that old cork. His signature was on every one, and what fun we used to have together. Many's the night I have put him back in his basket." ☞Old Q. hopes he may meet up with B.A.M. as he sounds like a man of taste.

★ ★

☞Three Evening Prayers written by Jane Austen for her own family are now published for the first time by the Colt Press, 615 Commercial Street, San Francisco. Limited to 300 copies at $5; or unbound sheets at $4, for bookbinders wishing to make their own case. ☞We were sorry to read of the death of Arthur G. Staples, veteran Down-East editor, who had been writing wise and racy pieces for the Lewiston *Journal* (Maine) since 1883. Mr. Staples was excellent on all country themes, such as beans, blueberries, blizzards, etc. We included his admirable little essay *The Smell of a Brush Fire* in a collection we edited back in 1924.

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— *The New Yorker*

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